

The University of Texas at Austin
Department of Nutritional Sciences
Didactic Program in Dietetics

Student Handbook

The Didactic Program in Dietetics at The University of Texas at Austin is currently granted Accreditation by the Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND), 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000, Chicago, IL 60606, Phone number (800) 877-1600 or (312) 899-0040.

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Table of Contents

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Page</u>
Introduction.....	3
Program Mission.....	3
Program Goals.....	3
Curriculum	4
Foundation Knowledge Requirements and Learning Objectives.....	5
Academic Calendar.....	7
Verification Statement.....	7
Didactic Program Policies.....	7

Introduction

The University of Texas at Austin offers a *Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD)* for students who are interested in becoming a registered dietitian. Student who completion the DPD program and earn a bachelor's degree will receive a verification statement issued by the DPD Program Director that will qualify them to apply to dietetic internships. In addition to completing the DPD program, a competitive applicant for dietetic internships will have a strong GPA, a combination of volunteer and work experience in the core areas of dietetics: clinical, community, and foodservice management. DPD graduates who complete a dietetic internship are eligible to write the national registration examination of the Commission of Dietetic Registration to become Registered Dietitians (RD) and may become active members of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. The DPD Program Director is Sara Sweitzer, PhD, RD, LD whose office is located in 329 Gearing Hall.

Program Mission

The mission of the Didactic Program in Dietetics at The University of Texas at Austin is to provide excellent academic preparation of students for admission to dietetic internships and/or graduate school through integration of science-oriented education and professional preparation for dietetics practice. This program seeks to develop in students an awareness of economic, social, cultural and psychological influences on behavior necessary for promotion and maintenance of nutritional well-being among individuals and groups in the community. Guidance in critical thinking and evidence-based analysis of current research are combined with scientific and managerial principles to promote skills needed to create and evaluate sound nutritional care.

Program Goal 1: - To prepare graduates with strong academic preparation for admission to supervised practice programs and /or graduate school.

Objectives:

1. Ninety percent of University of Texas at Austin DPD students entering junior year will complete the program within 4 years.
2. Over a five-year period, 60% of DPD graduates will apply for a dietetic internship or other supervised practice programs within 12 months of program completion.
3. Over a five year period 70% of graduates applying to a dietetic internship or other SPP will receive an appointment within 12 months of program completion.
4. Ninety percent of DPD graduates enrolled in a dietetic internship will rate their preparation in various nutrition and food service skills as "satisfactory" (3 or above on a 5 point scale) in seven measures.
5. Ninety percent of dietetic internship directors will rate DPD graduates as "satisfactory" (3 or above on a 5 point scale).

6. Ninety percent of DPD graduates accepted to an SPP with a combined Master's degree will be accepted into the graduate program as well as the SPP.

Program Goal 2: Prepare students with to be successful active entry-level dietetics and dietetics-related professionals within their communities.

Objectives:

1. Ninety percent of graduates completing a dietetic internship will earn a passing score on first sitting for the Registration Examination for Dietitians administered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration.
2. Mean scaled score of graduates sitting for the Registration Examination for Dietitians will be above the national mean for the total exam, and the nutrition and foodservice management sections.
3. Over a five year period 60% of alumni survey respondents will indicate that they are employed in a dietetics or dietetics-related job.
4. Over a five year period 60% of alumni survey respondents will indicate that they are active in local professional organizations.

Annual program outcome data is available upon request.

Curriculum

The DPD program is one of two degree options in dietetics within the Department of Nutritional Sciences. The following links provide the suggested coursework for completing the DPD program at The University of Texas at Austin.

[Bachelor of Science in Nutrition Option I: Didactic Program in Dietetics Degree Plan](#)

[Nutritional Sciences Option I: DPD Suggested 4-Year Plan](#)

[Interactive Degree Audit](#)

Graduation and program completion requirements for all degree options for the Department of Nutritional Sciences is available at: <http://www.cns.utexas.edu/degree-checklists>

When transfer students are admitted to UT at Austin the office that works with transfer students will determine what courses transfer to UT equivalents. The transfer student then may have their transcript evaluated by the DPD Program Director to determine the classes they need to complete.

The DPD curriculum is designed so the student progresses from pre-major or supporting coursework to the core dietetics curriculum. Admission to the DPD program requires the student to be in good academic standing within the University (GPA greater than 2.0) A grade of "C-" in prerequisite courses is required in order to progress in the DPD program.

Foundation Knowledge Requirements and Learning Outcomes

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

KRD 1.1 The curriculum must reflect the scientific basis of the dietetics profession and must include research methodology, interpretation of research literature and integration of research principles into evidence-based

- a. Learning Outcome: Students must be able to demonstrate how to locate, interpret, evaluate and use professional literature to make evidence-based practice.
- b. Learning Outcome: Students must be able to use current information technologies to locate and apply evidence-based guidelines and protocols; for example, the AND Evidence Analysis Library, Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and National Guideline Clearinghouse Web sites.

Domain 2: Professional Practice Expectations: beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviors for the Professional dietitian level of practice.

KRD 2.1 The curriculum must include opportunities to develop a variety of communication skills sufficient for entry into pre-professional practice.

- a. Learning Outcome: Students are able to demonstrate effective and professional oral and written communication and documentation and use of current information technologies when communicating with individuals and groups.
- b. Learning Outcome: Students are able to demonstrate assertiveness, advocacy and negotiation skills appropriate to the situation.

KRD 2.2 The curriculum must provide principles and techniques of effective counseling methods.

- a. Learning Outcome: Students are able to demonstrate counseling techniques to facilitate behavior change.

KRD 2.3 The curriculum must include opportunities to understand governance of dietetics practice, such as the Scope of Dietetics Practice and the Code of Ethics for the Profession of Dietetics; and interdisciplinary relationships in various practice settings.

- a. Learning Outcomes: Students are able to locate, understand and apply established guidelines to a professional practice scenario.
- b. Learning Outcome: Students are able to identify and describe the roles of others with whom the Registered Dietitian collaborates in the delivery of food and nutrition services.

Domain 3: Clinical and Customer Services: Development and Delivery of Information, Products and Services to Individuals, Groups and Populations.

KRD 3.1 The curriculum must reflect the principles of Medical Nutrition Therapy and the practice of the Nutrition Care Process including principles and methods of assessment, diagnosis, identification and implementing of interventions and strategies for monitoring and evaluation.

- a. Learning Outcome: Students are able to use the Nutrition Care Process to make decisions, to identify nutrition-related problems and determine and evaluate nutrition interventions.

KDR 3.2 The curriculum must include the role of environment, food, nutrition and lifestyle choices in health promotion and disease prevention.

- a. Learning Outcome: Students must be able to develop interventions that affect change and enhance wellness in diverse individuals and groups.

KRD 3.3 The curriculum must include education and behavior change theories and techniques.

- a. Learning Outcomes: Students must be able to develop an educational session or program/educational strategy for a target population.

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.

KRD 4.1 The curriculum must include management and business theories and principles required to deliver programs and services.

- a. Learning Outcome: Students must be able to apply management and business theories and principles required to deliver programs and services.
- b. Learning Outcome: Students must be able to evaluate a budget and interpret financial data.

KRD 4.2 The curriculum must include content related to quality management of food & nutrition services.

- a. Learning Outcome: Students must be able to apply safety principles related to food, personnel and consumers.
- b. Learning Outcome: Students are able to develop outcome measures, use informatics principles and technology to collect and analyze data for assessment and evaluate data to use in decision making.

KRD 4.3 The curriculum must include the fundamentals of public policy, including the legislative and regulatory basis of dietetics practice.

- a. Learning Outcome: Students r able to explain the impact of a public policy position on dietetics practice.

KRD 4.4 The curriculum must include content related to health care systems.

- a. Learning Outcomes: Students must be able to explain the impact of health care policy and different care delivery systems on food and nutrition services.

KRD 4.5 The curriculum must include content related to coding and billing of dietetics/nutrition services to obtain reimbursement for services from public or private insurers.

Domain 5: Support Knowledge: Knowledge Underlying the Requirements Specifies Above.

KRD 5.1 The food and food systems foundation of the dietetics profession must be evident in the curriculum. Course content must include the principles of food science and food systems, techniques of food preparation and application to the development, modification and evaluation of recipes, menus and food products acceptable to diverse groups.

KRD 5.2 The physical and biological science foundation of the dietetics profession must be evident in the curriculum. Course content must include organic chemistry, biochemistry, physiology, genetics, microbiology, pharmacology, statistics, nutrient metabolism, and nutrition across lifespan.

KRD 5.3 The behavioral and social science foundation of the dietetics profession must be evident in the curriculum. Course content must include concepts of human behavior and diversity, such as psychology, sociology or anthropology.

Academic Calendar

The academic calendars can be found at: <http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/introduction/academic-calendar/>

Verification Statement

In order to receive a Didactic Program in Dietetics Verification Statement from the University of Texas at Austin, the student must fulfill the following criteria:

1. Baccalaureate degree (does not have to be in nutrition or related field)
2. Completion of the following courses or transfer equivalent with a grade of C - or better (courses cannot be taken on a pass/fail basis)
3. Completion of at least four upper-division nutrition courses in residence at UT Austin.

Didactic Program Policies

The DPD Program adheres to the University policies and procedures for undergraduate academic integrity. The policies and procedures are found in Chapter 11 of the *Institutional Rule on Student Services and Activities*. Found at: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sa/downloads/InstRulesCh11.pdf>

Academic Policy:

Upper division courses require a “C-” or better in prerequisite courses. Students are able to retake a course with a grade below a “C-”. When they retake a course for a higher grade, UT averages the two grades together for GPA purposes.

If students drop below a 2.0 GPA, he/she is put on scholastic probation and has to sign a grade contract that specifies what he/she needs to do in order to continue the following semester. Individual professors can send out warning notifications to students who are not performing well in classes.

Advisors can see these notifications in the Advisors Toolkit and can then discuss what is going on with the student to possibly identify ways to improve the performance, or offer suggestions on where to seek help. Further information can be found at: <http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/academic-policies-and-procedures/scholastic-probation-and-dismissal/>

Evaluation:

Faculty members are free to develop their own methods of evaluating the performance of students in their classes, both undergraduate and graduate, but they are required to make the methods of evaluation to be used known in writing before the end of the fourth class day each semester and the second class day each summer term. Responsibility for assuring adequate methods of evaluation rests with departmental faculties and is subject to administrative review. In courses with multiple sections, departments should provide for necessary coordination. Materials used in evaluating a student’s performance must be collected by the instructor at or before the regularly scheduled final examination. The final examination is a common method of final evaluation in courses.

Termination Policy:

Disciplinary/termination procedures : <http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/student-services/discipline/>

Tuition and fees:

http://www.utexas.edu/business/accounting/sar/t_f_rates.html

Withdrawal and refund of tuition and fees: available at: <http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/academic-policies-and-procedures/withdrawal/>

Student Support Services:

The University of Texas has several support services available for students:

The Sanger Learning Center: <http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/slc>

The Undergraduate Writing Center: <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>

Services for Students with Disabilities: <http://ddce.utexas.edu/disability/>

Health Services: <http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/student-services/university-health-services/>

Counseling and Mental Health: <http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/student-services/counseling-and-mental-health-center/>

Testing: <http://www.ctl.utexas.edu/studenttesting/welcome-to-student-testing-services/>

Financial Aid: <http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/student-services/student-financial-services/>

Grievance Procedures

The DPD Program as undergraduate curriculum adheres to the University grievance policy. The policy of the University states that course complaints are to be dealt with at the instructor level and if not resolved move to the Department Chair, and on to the Academic Dean if not resolved within the Department. Specific Program complaints are handled by the DPD Program Director.

Student Grievance Procedures are available in the University Catalog at <http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/student-services/student-grievance-procedures/>

If students have complaints concerning the DPD program and have exhausted all avenues with the program and the University, then the student may submit a complaint directly to ACEND.

ACEND
120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000
Chicago, IL 60606-6995
312.899.0040 ext. 5400
www.eatright.org

Protection and privacy of student information:

The DPD program adheres to the University privacy and records access policies. These can be found at: <http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/appendices/appendix-c/educational-records/>

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Insurance and Liability:

Insurance requirements, including those for professional liability: <http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/registration-tuition-and-fees/tuition-and-fees/student-insurance/>

Liability for safety in travel to or from assigned areas:

Students are expected to provide their own transportation to and from sites assigned for course activities as necessary. Travel to off campus sites is minimal and well within the Austin city limits. The University assumes no liability for their safety during this travel.

Credit for Prior Experience:

The DPD program does not grant undergraduate course credit for prior experience.

