

Appalachian State University  
Handbook

For students in the

Dietetic Internship

As a part of the

Master of Science Degree in Nutrition

2018 - 2019

*Revised July 25, 2018, Paul Moore, DI Director*

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The contents of this handbook are a guide for graduate students participating in their dietetic internship. As dietetic internship students are part of the graduate program, they are expected to following and adhere to all policies and procedures as described in the Graduate Handbook. If in any case discrepancies arise between the Dietetic Internship Handbook and the Graduate Handbook, the Graduate Handbook will govern the situation.

## INTRODUCTION

This Handbook is designed as a guide for students entering the Dietetic Internship (DI) which is a component of the graduate program in nutrition at Appalachian State University. Each student is responsible for reading and complying with the policies and responsibilities outlined in this handbook. The DI is a supervised practice program, and is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) of The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND).

Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics  
120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000  
Chicago, Illinois 60606-4772  
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The DI, usually completed in the second year of the graduate program, and provides students with practical experiences and training that fulfill ACEND and AND requirements. Individuals who successfully complete the DI will be issued a supervised practice (DI) Verification Statement and will be eligible to apply to take the Registration Examination for Registered Dietitians.

As a graduate student of Appalachian State University, the *Graduate Bulletin & Course Catalog* offers guidance on all university policies and procedures and outlines the student support services available to assist each student in completing academic goals.

Appalachian State University is committed to equality of educational opportunity. The University does not discriminate in access to its educational programs and activities, or with respect to hiring or the terms and conditions of employment, on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, creed, sex, gender identity and expression, political affiliation, age, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation.

## MISSION, GOALS, AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE ASU DIETETIC INTERNSHIP

### Mission:

To prepare graduates to function as dietetics professionals utilizing rigorous academic preparation, research experience, and guided practice in rural health settings to enhance future careers in nutrition.

### Program Goals:

- Develop and maintain a dietetic internship program that exemplifies excellence, for the purpose of preparing competent dietetics practitioners who possess the knowledge and skills necessary for dietetics practice
- Produce in a timely manner graduates who are employable in a variety of dietetics practice settings including rural settings

The DI program at Appalachian State University is committed to placing internship students in a variety of appropriate supervised practice sites, coordinated to provide a foundation in the primary areas of dietetics practice: clinical dietetics, food systems management and community practice. Rural Health is the program concentration. Hence, the focus is on hospitals and clinics in rural settings primarily in western North Carolina.

### The Dietetic Internship:

- Enables student acquisition and application of supporting knowledge to master minimum performance levels of core competencies for entry-level dietitians
- Propagates student curiosity and inquiry about the theory and practice of dietetics that will lead to discovery and application of new ideas and knowledge
- Encourages the development of professional attitudes, values, and integrity, needed to begin independent professional practice in the field of dietetics
- Emphasizes the need for service and lifelong learning

- Facilitates decision-making and leadership skills.

### **ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS**

Acceptance into the Graduate School at Appalachian State University and acceptance into the Dietetic Internship occur simultaneously. In the first calendar year of the two year program students complete 21 hours of graduate coursework. To continue the graduate program and enter the dietetic internship the second year, students must:

- Complete the first year of graduate studies with a minimum GPA of 3.0
- Complete research requirements (NUT 5901 or NUT 5999)

### **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Financial aid available to graduate students are Stafford Loans (depending on need they will either be subsidized or non-subsidized.) Further information is available by writing or visiting:

The [Office of Student Financial Aid](#)

ASU Box 32059

John Thomas Hall

Appalachian State University Boone, NC 28608-2059

### **ESTIMATED PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM FEES AND EXPENSES BY YEAR**

Tuition and Fees (9+ credit hours) per academic year

In State	\$8,000
Out of State	\$22,000
*Health Insurance/Medical Care per year	\$2,600

Books (includes exam review manual and required online DI Review Course 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester)	\$500
Lab Coat/shoes/identification badge	\$200
AND Annual Dues (Student)	\$58
District Dietetic Association Fee	
Professional Meetings	\$300
Housing and Food <b>per month</b> (depends on living arrangements)	\$1000 - \$1700
Campus Parking Fees per year	\$240
Transportation	(up to \$80/week depending on internship placement)
Criminal Background check and Drug Screen	\$60( app.)
Hepatitis B vaccine (3 shots), TB test ( <a href="http://healthservices.appstate.edu">http://healthservices.appstate.edu</a> )	\$120

*\*Unless covered by another's insurance*

### DESCRIPTION OF THE CURRICULUM

The DI curriculum is a two semester sequence which begins after successful completion of the first year of defined graduate study.

Students will register as follows:

Fall Term

*NUT 5250 Dietetic Practice 1* (3 semester hours)

*NUT 5900 Internship* (6 semester hours)

Spring Term

*NUT 5255 Dietetic Practice II* (3 semester hours)

*NUT 5900 Internship* (6 semester hours)

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics confirms readiness for entering the DI from the accredited Didactic Programs in Dietetics (DPD) course of study that each student has completed and the subsequent DPD Verification Statement received. In addition, each student beginning the DI at ASU has completed one year

of graduate courses, thus the expectation is that each student is accordingly prepared. Nonetheless, students are encouraged to revisit and review clinical, foodservice, and community topics in order to “brush up” on these, which were learned previously in DPD courses. Students will then have the summer to review and prepare for entry into supervised practice.

The Appalachian State University Dietetic Internship Program does not participate in Prior Assessed Learning; thus, no internship hours will be granted for activities completed prior to the internship.

### **Successful completion of the Dietetic Internship Requirements:**

1. Completion of all requirements for MS in Nutrition
2. Successful completion of the EatrightPrep DI Exam Review Course (2<sup>nd</sup> semester, 2<sup>nd</sup> year)
3. Satisfactory performance on the Nutrition Comprehensive Exam, which is a practice registration exam administered at the end of the second semester of the DI year
4. Grade of "satisfactory" in both semesters of NUT 5900
5. Grade of "satisfactory" in NUT 5250 and 5255
6. Completion of all contact hours of the DI with completion of all core competencies signed by the Site Preceptors and Program Director
7. Completion and presentation of graduate research project or thesis at two faculty-selected venues
8. Consistent positive Professional Behavior Review Evaluation as defined in that section of this manual

### **Core Competencies (found in Appendices A, B, and C)**

**Note: All Appendices described below will be provided upon entry into supervised practice.**

#### **Appendix A**

The Competencies / Learning Outcomes for DI Programs (approved June 2017) are listed in numerical order in the first row of the table. The competencies addressed in each rotation are noted by in the four rows labeled Rotations A, B, C, and D. These alphabetic designations indicate the rotations that comprise the Curriculum for the DI experience.



## **Appendix B**

The 4 sets of competencies for each rotation – A, B, C, and D – are provided in Appendix B.

Rotation A is Professional Skills (220 contact hours, 42 competencies, 33 weeks); competencies are completed under the direction of departmental research faculty and the DI Director.

Many Rotation A activities take place in Dietetic Practice class, meeting on a weekly basis at ASU in Boone or via the AsULearn online classroom.

The meeting format is at the discretion of the DI Director. Instructions for accessing the online classroom for Dietetic Practice class will be provided during dietetic internship orientation. Rotation A activities are also completed at state and district dietetic association meetings as well as other professional venues. The intern is responsible for travel costs to/from these events.

Rotation B is Clinical Nutrition (360 contact hours, 59 competencies, 12 weeks). Rotation C is Foodservice/ Management (360 contact hours, 53 competencies, 12 weeks). Rotation D is Community Nutrition / Outpatient Services (260 contact hours, 35 competencies, 9 weeks). The 4 rotations account for a total of 1200 hours of supervised practice, as required by ACEND. The internship requires completion of a total of 189 assignments related to competencies. Students will complete these assignments in a timely fashion by finishing work by due dates as assigned in the NUT 5250/5255 Syllabi, and by completing work on a schedule provided by the DI Director. Successful completion of the internship requires faithful adherence to specified timelines.

Successful completion means that all activities will culminate with students practicing as entry-level dietitians. “Practice” in any endeavor means repetition. Students may need to repeat some activities to become proficient to practice as entry-level dietitians. In some instances the student may need to increase the time spent in activities in order to achieve the desired level of proficiency. Practice occurs in realistic settings so predictions of exact time required to demonstrate proficiency are not made. Students should be alert to take advantage of additional learning opportunities as those opportunities arise. Students will develop a schedule for completing the planned experiences and should modify as necessary. All program requirements for the Master of Nutrition degree and the Dietetic Internship must be completed within 31 months of beginning the program.

## **Appendix C**

Evaluation of many planned experiences occurs by means of specific forms which are located in this appendix. The student has the option to use forms of existing facilities (when more appropriate to guide a

planned learning experience) or to create a new form. If the facility version of the form is used, that form should collect data and produce outcomes that are identical to the DI form provided. A statement placed at the top of the replacement page should state the exact form that is being substituted. Notify the DI Director for any form replacement changes for those forms in **Appendix C**.

### **Verification of Competencies**

Columns are included on the various evaluation forms, including Appendix B, for the verification of planned experiences and should be initialed by Preceptors and/or the DI Program Director. Students are expected to have each activity signed by the preceptor and/or DI Director **in a timely fashion as that activity is completed**. Each item is to be dated on the day the item is completed. A student should not submit a sheet to the DI Director in which 30 items have been dated with the same date noted for each. Intended dates for completion of activities should be included in the documentation of planned learning experiences. Thus, each student and the DI Program Director have the means of monitoring progress continually throughout the program.

### **Summary of Supervised Practice-DI**

A summary of the supervised practice experiences with hours planned for each rotation is provided in **Appendix D**.

### **Master Rotation Schedule**

A copy of the master rotation schedule is kept by the DI director. Each student must adhere to the prearranged rotation schedule and time allotments to ensure completion of the DI internship.

### **Class Schedule**

The DI begins with an orientation session on the Appalachian State University campus. While the DI is primarily a practice program, learning is enhanced when opportunity is provided for discussion and integration of current knowledge and professional presentation of work. Therefore all DI students are

expected to come to the Appalachian State University campus (or other sites as identified by the DI Director) weekly for meetings and the Dietetic Practice class. Alternatively, class meetings may take place online at the DI Director's or instructors' discretion. The syllabi for the two Dietetics Practice (I, II) courses are located in **Appendix E**. An academic calendar can be found in **Appendix F** and at <https://registrar.appstate.edu/calendars-schedules>.

During the Dietetic Internship, **students are expected to be available for all internship meetings and activities**. Failure to do so will jeopardize successful completion of the Dietetic Internship.

Note: Students are responsible for communicating with their research advisors regarding necessary meetings and timetables for work to be completed. Research advisors may require that students meet with them in Boone on Mondays at the advisor's discretion, even if Dietetic Practice class is held via the online classroom. Failure to respond in a timely fashion to research advisors' request is grounds for disciplinary action or termination from the program.

#### **After Successful Completion of the DI**

A Dietetic Internship Verification Statement (three original signed copies) will be issued to the student by the Program Director. This verifies that the student has completed an accredited supervised practice program (DI) which is necessary to fulfill eligibility requirements of the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) and the ADA so that the student may apply to take the registration examination for dietitians.

#### **Withdrawal from DI**

Students who are considering withdrawal from the DI should first consult with the DI Program Director. Extenuating circumstances may be a rationale for receiving an incomplete in any course. A prescribed time frame, not to exceed one year, would be allowed to complete the course. The DI Program Director and the department Chair will make the decision. If a student finds withdrawal necessary, the registrar must be notified immediately. The policy on refund and withdrawal is outlined in the graduate bulletin and the schedule of classes, and at <http://www.registrar.appstate.edu/schedules/droprefund.html>

## **POLICIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The DI is sponsored by Appalachian State University and students must comply with the policies and procedures of the University. An official DI Policy and Procedure Manual is kept in the Department Office of the Department of Nutrition and Health Care Management, and interns may see the Manual upon request.

The DI Handbook provides the guidelines, rules, and regulations for the Program.

The Director of the Dietetic Internship is ultimately responsible for determining that the Performance Requirements for entry-level dietetic practitioners have been met through successful completion of planned experiences.

Planned experiences take place at a variety of facilities in the Central and Western parts of North Carolina and Eastern Tennessee. Students are allowed to take part in planned experiences through contractual agreements between assigned facilities and the NHM department at Appalachian State University. Facilities and preceptors are strongly committed to dietetic education and are compensated through the contributions of the students. Students are expected to abide by all the policies and procedures of the assigned facilities. Additional policies and responsibilities are addressed in this handbook.

### **Computer Resources**

Students will need their own computer. The NHM computer lab (LS Dougherty 209) is available for completing assignments, and students may pay for printing on a per page basis. Computers and printers are provided in the Graduate Lounge (LS Dougherty 103); graduate students supply their paper. ASU provides an up to date dietary intake and food analysis software (ESHA Food Processor) as part of a multi-user license. If you are unfamiliar with ESHA, please request assistance in advance of internship for help in using this program. All work submitted should use this database unless the preceptor/facility specifies a different program. Students should check to confirm that software programs at the sites are the latest version.

### **Health and Health Care**

Each dietetic student who does not provide his or her own health insurance must be covered by a policy purchased at the time tuition was paid. Prior to entry into the DI, a copy of the insurance policy or insurance card (front and back) must be submitted to the Program Director which indicates policy

number, coverage data, company name, and name of the insured. Coverage must be verified before each practice rotation. **Students are not covered by Workers' compensation.** . \_\_\_\_\_

During the DI each student must meet the policies and procedures of each affiliated site in regard to health care. This includes up to date vaccination records, recent physical examination, hepatitis B vaccination, and tuberculosis testing (within 1 year). An Internship Health Exam Form is provided and is to be used for this purpose unless the facility uses another form **(Appendix G)**.

### **Student Health and Wellness Services at Appalachian State**

For information regarding student health and wellness services at Appalachian State, see:

<http://www.appstate.edu/studentlife/health.php>

### **Professional Liability Insurance**

Dietetic students are required to have liability insurance during the internship year (second year). Liability insurance is provided through Appalachian State University when the student is enrolled in NUT 5900. The policy provided exceeds industry standards, and provides \$2,000,000 single incident and \$4,000,000 aggregate coverage. During the enrollment period, the student will be covered. If verification of coverage is needed by the facility, please request a certificate of coverage from the DI Director. See for additional details: <http://www.registrar.appstate.edu/internship.html>

### **Travel Liability**

Liability for travel to and from assigned facilities and the University is the responsibility of the student.

Appalachian State University is not responsible for the liability of travel. The student must have access to a car during the DI because all sites require student travel. Some sites may require the student to pay a parking fee. Students must provide proof of auto insurance coverage to the DI Director.

### **Concurrent / Prior Employment**

Dietetic students cannot be placed at an approved internship site where that student has previously been an intern (any academic level) or been employed by that facility or the host organization. When at an

internship site, the dietetic student is not to be a substitute for a paid employee although the student may perform certain aspects of a paid employee's job, and will be expected to provide staff relief during the rotations. The purpose and focus of doing those activities are to complete assignments that focus on providing experience defined by a competency. Dietetic internship students cannot receive payment for work while at an approved internship site.

The dietetic internship requires full attention and energies to be successful in the learning experience and completing timely assignments. **Success requires that the intern assign the internship a top priority during the supervised practice year.** Completion of written assignments will require a significant time commitment beyond supervised practice hours. **Part-time employment of any type is strongly discouraged.**

### **Background Checks**

The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) requires background criminal checks of all employees, volunteers and students in health care facilities. Students are responsible for complying with requirements at their facilities, which include CBCs and drug screens.

The UNC system has a contract organization that conducts the background checks and drug screens (if required) at a reduced rate. The results are posted in a secure environment; both the student and the university can view the results:

- Approximately one month prior to the beginning of your first rotation, you will receive two emails from Certiphi.com. The emails will contain instructions for ordering your background check and completing your drug screen.
- Each intern has the responsibility to pay the associated fee. Additional background checks may be necessary for certain internship sites.

### **Privacy of Intern Information**

Appalachian State University complies with all provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). Further information can be found at:

<http://www.registrar.appstate.edu/records/FERPA.html>

Only authorized personnel have access to intern files. These personnel include the Department Chair, the DI Director and/or designee, the Graduate Program Director, and other personnel allowed access by ASU policy.

All intern files containing private information are kept in a locked cabinet in the office of the Department of Nutrition and Healthcare Management. Interns have the right to see the contents of their files.

### **Contents of Intern Files**

Prior to beginning the first rotation, each intern must ensure that the following items have been placed in her/his official file:

- Original DPD verification statement (not a copy)
- Official transcript (not a copy)
- Internship Health Form (Appendix G)
- Immunization record
- Background check (satisfactory)
- Drug screen (clear)
- Proof of health insurance; proof of auto insurance
- Proof of current student membership in the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND)
- Signed copy of intern agreement with the ASU DI program (Appendix H)
- Other items deemed necessary by the DI Director or required by internship sites

Other items placed in the intern file include documents relevant to ACEND accreditation and to the graduate program in nutrition.

In the event that a minor issue is noted on the student's criminal background check, the student agrees that the DI Director may discuss the issue with appropriate personnel at the supervised practice facility. The final decision regarding the student's admission to the facility rests with appropriate facility personnel such as the HR department and/or the preceptor. A student not admitted to supervised practice due to a background check issue may be unable to complete the program. In this case the student will be counseled out of the program.

**Students are not allowed to begin supervised practice rotations until all required items are in the student file.**

### **Access to Support Services**

ASU students have access to a broad range of support services, including but not limited to: Technology Support Services, the Career Development Center, thesis and dissertation workshops, the University Writing Center, the Counseling Center, financial aid counseling services, graduate student organizations, library services, research funding and grant writing assistance, the University Bookstore, disability services, the Student Wellness Center, Student Health Services, the Student Recreation Center, and computer labs. Students are strongly encouraged to utilize these services as appropriate. Graduate Nutrition Program faculty may recommend use of these services to students at need.

### **Housing and Transportation**

Students are responsible for securing housing and providing their own transportation both on and off campus. Housing during rotations will depend on the location. Some interns may have access to reduced cost housing via Area Health Education Centers (AHEC). <http://www.med.unc.edu/ahec/centers/programoffice.htm>.

Time required for travel to a facility or to campus does not count toward recorded supervised practice hours.

### **Professional Dress and Grooming**

Students are expected to maintain a professional appearance at all times in the DI, whether at assigned facilities, professional meetings or Appalachian State University. Students should dress according to the guidelines and policies of the facility where assigned. Students have the responsibility to query assigned facility supervisors regarding dress expectations, and to comply with facility dress codes.

Business casual dress usually is acceptable when working in administrative, clinical, community and outpatient areas. Depending on facility expectations, a white lab jacket may be used in conjunction with professional dress. Note that most preceptors prefer long or mid length lab coats, not coats that are above the waist. Lab jackets/coats may be purchased locally or online at one of many online sites.

Skirt length must be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee. Appropriate hosiery or socks **must** be worn during all duty hours. Shoes should be appropriate for the setting and safe for walking where



floors may be slippery (no leather soles). Extreme high heels, tennis shoes, clogs, sandals and platform shoes or other shoes in which the toes or parts of the foot are exposed are not allowed.

Body piercing, except for single ear pierces, is unacceptable at all facilities (this includes nose and lip piercings). Excessive jewelry and excessive makeup are not appropriate in any rotation. Nails should be neatly groomed, not excessively long, and clean. Conservative nail appearance is acceptable; unusual or garish nail polish colors, or pictures on fingernails, are not acceptable. Tattoos must be covered per facility policy. T-shirts and clothing with lettering that includes advertisements or potentially offensive messages are not appropriate in the health care setting. Excessive or heavy perfume should be avoided, since the scent may bother others.

In general, when assigned to food production-related activities, students must wear hair nets and closed toe shoes. Long hair must be pulled back or up. Denim clothing of any type is usually unacceptable; consult the individual dress policy of the facility where assigned.

Clothing should be high enough, long enough, thick enough, and loosely fitting enough to cover the body when standing, bending down, or reaching. Extremely tight or revealing clothing is not acceptable. **The bottom line: if in doubt, ask for clarification *in advance*.**

Preceptors will ask students to go home and change if the student fails to wear appropriate attire.

Completion of the internship can be in jeopardy if any dress or fundamental personal hygiene behaviors are violated. A good example to illustrate this is failure to wear a hair covering/appropriate clothing, or consuming food when working in the food preparation area. Remember, student professional behavior and dress serve as a model for all others to follow. Students also represent Appalachian State University.

Faculty members (including preceptors) maintain the right to make decisions regarding participation of students in DI activities based on the appropriateness of the student's appearance. Any activity denied to a student on the basis of appearance will be the responsibility of the student to make up. The student should meet with the preceptor to explore the possibility of rescheduling that activity. Inappropriate dress should NOT occur.

### **Identification Badges**

In most cases, facilities will issue an identification badge and will require the student to wear this identification badge whenever representing the facility. Each intern will be provided with an ASU College of Health Sciences identification badge which should be worn if a facility badge is not provided.

### **Meals in Facilities**

Students may purchase meals in most facilities or bring a lunch. The facility policy for meals must be followed. Time taken for meals does not count toward recorded contact hours.

### **Vacation/Holiday/Absences**

An academic calendar detailing holidays and breaks for Appalachian State University is provided in **Appendix F** and is sent to each facility preceptor; however, *students are expected to follow the calendar of the facility where placed*. **This may include working nights, weekends or holidays**. The schedule is determined by the preceptor. Students should not assume that Appalachian State University holidays, vacations, and semester breaks will be honored at the facility. **Thus, students should not make travel plans or schedule any time away from the internship without receiving documented/written approval first from the facility preceptor and the DI Director.** To receive approval, the student must submit a request to the facility preceptor and the DI director at least one month in advance. If necessary, include information or a suggested plan to make up the lost days in terms of rotation work schedule and competencies.

The student is expected to transition from a student-driven, academic calendar to the typical workplace calendar. In the workplace, vacations are planned and scheduled in advance with the supervisor, and in accordance with the workplace's policies. Enough time is built into each rotation schedule that an intern may complete a rotation several days ahead of schedule. Should this occur, the intern may use the available time to complete assignments and activities, and to prepare for the next rotation.

NUT 5250/5255 sessions on campus will follow the academic calendar unless prior approval for changes is agreed upon by the DI Program Director, facility preceptor, and the student intern. Students are expected to

adhere to the scheduled rotations in facilities and to attend the Dietetics Practice class as scheduled.

The student is responsible for contacting the facility preceptor if unable to report for a rotation. Students should discuss facility weather policies, etc. with preceptors at the outset of the rotation. Likewise, students must contact the program director immediately when unable to attend any class or report at their agreed time to a rotation. Students are responsible for making up hours missed. Absence from a rotation or failure to complete didactic work could result in a student's failure to complete assignments as scheduled and ultimately to the student's dismissal from the program.

### **Preceptor/Supervisor Role / Responsibilities**

Preceptors/supervisors are dedicated professionals who voluntarily provide time and expertise to Dietetic Interns. ASU greatly values these preceptors/supervisors who have the following responsibilities:

- Serve as a role model for students
- Interpret with the DI Program Director and Site Coordinator the planned experiences and objectives for rotations and direct activities which are consistent with the objectives
- Participate in student evaluation on a formative and summative basis and give feedback to the student, Program Director and Site Coordinator on student progress
- Help students identify strengths and weaknesses, and make plans for improvements
- Guide students by encouraging professional growth and in identifying future roles in dietetics
- Communicate to the DI Program Director on student progress, new opportunities, and changes that affect ASU's affiliation with that facility
- Participate in annual program evaluation

### **DI Student Responsibilities:**

The Department of NHM, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC recognizes the student's goal to fulfill eligibility requirements of the CDR and ADA by participating in a DI; therefore, the following responsibilities have been determined as relevant to the program and to practice.

Relevant to the program, each student will:

- Sign a Student Agreement form which states that the student has read, understood, and agreed to comply with the policies and responsibilities as outlined in the DI Student Handbook and the Student Agreement with the Dietetic Internship at ASU (**Appendix H**)
- Report registration examination results to the program director by signing a release of information to the ASU program when applying to take the exam
- Participate in evaluation of the program prior to graduation and via alumni reports including confidential University evaluation forms used for the Dietetic Practice I and II courses, evaluation of each rotation site and preceptor (**Appendix I**), and overall Program Evaluation and Exit Interview

Relevant to practice, each student will:

- Become familiar with the curriculum and core competencies for supervised practice, found in Appendices A, B, and C.
- **Prepare a weekly plan and monitor progress for completing all planned experiences at each assigned facility (see “Student Evaluation” section).** Arrive at all assigned rotations and classes on time, prepared to accomplish tasks and, thus, demonstrate competencies expected
- Complete each planned experience at the level of competency expected even if some experiences must be repeated
- Apply to the practice of dietetics the information presented in didactic class and gained from current research
- Adhere to the timeline for completion of competencies provided by the DI Director
- Seek additional resources to increase learning (**Appendix J**)
- Plan and conduct a research project relevant to dietetic practice and communicate the findings
- Meet regularly with advisor to complete research project and attend research meetings with other dietetic students and faculty as scheduled
- Schedule facility work hours so as to not exceed 37 hours per week. At preceptor discretion, time may be scheduled during weekends, early mornings, and late evenings as well as traditional work periods.
- Abide by the Code of Ethics for the Profession of Dietetics (**Appendix K**)

Practice hours for the DI are defined as those during which the student is engaged in activities which are part of the job performed by the dietitian. Time spent in study, writing reports to document activities, eating meals, traveling, etc. **are not counted as practice**. Dietetic Practice I & II class attendance is required and will count toward Rotation A hours.

### **DI Program Director's Responsibilities**

- Chairs committee to determine student acceptance into DI
- Implements and manages all aspects of the DI at Appalachian State University, involving other faculty as appropriate
- Utilizes input from preceptors and other faculty to evaluate student performance
- Maintains all records, collects data, and submits reports in accordance with CADE accreditation standards
- Consults with Department Chair prior to handling performance issues of students who are at risk of not completing rotations successfully.
- Relevant to the DI Student
  - Advises students on the policies and responsibilities as delineated in the student handbook and the graduate bulletin
  - Assures that learning experiences provided will enable students to master core competencies for entry level dietitians
  - Coordinates learning experiences so that students increase level of mastery and self-confidence and are challenged to reach their individual potential
  - Provides periodic evaluation of each student through planned experience records, professional behavior review forms, and regular conferences, and uses this evaluation as a means of decision making
  - Fosters professional relationships between students and faculty, staff and health care team members
  - Coordinates DI offerings with the graduate program in NHM

## **Student Evaluation**

Conferences are to be held weekly with the preceptor at the facility. **It is the student's responsibility to schedule preceptor conferences.** The purpose of the conference is to discuss the following items:

- The purpose of specific experiences in relation to dietetic competencies
- Scheduling/planning of experiences
- Progress reports or questions on experiences
- Problems/issues that are identified and possible solutions
- Evaluation of specific experiences
- Performance evaluation
- Integration of current research into practice

Weekly reports (**Appendix L**) must be completed detailing the coming week's activities and competencies fulfilled during the previous week. The report is to be submitted **weekly**. Completed student assignments should be submitted to the DI Director on a weekly basis via AsULearn and follow a schedule as permitted by the specific rotation and defined by the DI Director. Ultimate responsibility lies with the student to ask questions in the weekly sessions or privately if unsure about an assignment. Submitted work will be reviewed and evaluated by the DI director. Student work must reflect appropriate application and experience of the competency. Accreditation standards require that the DI Director – not the Preceptor – make this determination. All submitted work will receive a Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. If unsatisfactory, the work will be returned with specific feedback for improvement. Unsatisfactory work must be redone until competency is achieved.

Students should realize that it is not unusual for work to be returned for resubmission, or for a preceptor to request that a task be repeated several times. "Practice" means repetition until mastery is achieved: just like practicing a sport, or practicing a musical instrument, some dietetic skills may need to be repeated before competence is attained.

**It is expected that work will be submitted on a weekly basis. The DI Director will provide a timeline for submission of work. Students should not wait until the final weeks of a rotation to begin**

**submitting competencies. This practice demonstrates an unprofessional attitude toward one's work, results in hardship for the student, and is unfair to the DI Director who must schedule adequate time each week to evaluate student work and complete numerous other internship-related activities. Ultimately, this practice constitutes unkindness to one's fellow interns because of the burden it places on the DI Director. Students who do not submit work on a timely basis will be subject to remediation or termination.**

Contact hours and a listing of specific competencies and/or activities for each week are tabulated and written on the Contact Hours Log Sheet (**Appendix M**), signed by the preceptor, and provided to the DI Director for review **each week**.

**Students should read carefully all the sub-components of the competency** to gain an understanding of the scope and sequence of activity required. All activity associated with competency completion should be documented. If forms are requested, the competency will not be considered complete until the forms are submitted. If the evaluation states "preceptor review", then a paragraph should detail key points of the session. The document should be titled appropriately with date stamps or dated signature.

### **Professional Behavior Review**

The professional behavior review provides an evaluation of conduct in completing Performance Requirements (**Appendix N**). Criteria are listed for Beginning, Intermediate, and Independent Level Professional Behaviors.

Beginning level professional behaviors are those behaviors which are considered by the faculty to be basic and necessary for students to be able to continue throughout the DI. All beginning level behaviors must be demonstrated consistently throughout the program. Part I of the evaluation form will be used to evaluate the beginning level professional behaviors. Assessment of the student will be indicated by a yes or no on this form with space for comments.

Intermediate and Independent Professional Behaviors are those that suggest growth and development of the student during the program. Assessment of these behaviors is completed on Part II of the Professional Behavior Review Form. These behaviors are rated on a scale of 0 to 5; a minimum of 3 is required for all learning experiences on the final review of each rotation for successful completion of the internship.

At midpoint and during the last week of rotations B, C, and D, the student and preceptor will complete the professional behavior review, for a total of 6 required professional behavior reviews throughout the internship. If a particular rotation involves several preceptors, then the student should use the preceptor with whom the student has spent the most time or with whom the student has been the most involved in meeting competencies. It is the responsibility of the student to submit the form to the preceptor at least one week PRIOR to the midpoint and last week so that the preceptor has adequate opportunity to schedule a time to meet. If the evaluation is completed by a secondary preceptor, the primary preceptor should also sign the evaluation. The DI Program Director is to receive an electronic copy of the review via AsULearn. The Professional Behavior Review serves to:

1. Provide written documentation of the student's professional performance.
2. Provide feedback to the student concerning strengths and weaknesses to facilitate student growth and development.

### **Academic Appeal Process**

The student has the right to appeal the grade/action taken for any course by using the procedures outlined on the ASU web page at <http://academicaffairs.appstate.edu/student-grievance-and-appeal-policies-and-procedures>. The first step is to confer with the DI Program Director and if dissatisfied with the results to proceed to the Department Chair. Should the student be dissatisfied after all other avenues within the Program and University have been exhausted, a written complaint may be made to ACEND using the contact information provided on page 4 of this Handbook.

### **DISCIPLINE/TERMINATION REVIEW PROCESS**

*Professionalism: Dietetic Internship students, as part of the graduate program, are subject and adhere to the same professional behavior expectations as described in the Graduate Handbook, Appendix 3.*

Criteria to be used for Disciplinary/Termination procedures are specified below. Any or all of these criteria are considered grounds for dismissal from the program:



- Consistent failure to demonstrate **all** beginning level professional behaviors
  
- Failure to achieve the expected standard for all planned learning experiences (minimum evaluation rating of 2) and all intermediate/independent professional behaviors (minimum evaluation rating of 3) by end of each rotation
  
- Failure to adhere to timelines for submission of assignments/documentation of competencies
  
- Conduct that unfavorably affects the morale or progress of fellow dietetic interns
  
- Conduct that unfavorably affects the morale of preceptors or is detrimental to the daily operations of supervised practice sites
  
- Conduct that unfavorably reflects on Appalachian State University (ASU), the College of Health Sciences, the ASU Graduate Program in Nutrition, or the ASU Dietetic Internship Program
  
- Conduct that violates the law or is unethical

Any student who meets one or more of the above criteria is subject to discipline/termination review by the DI Director.

The process will proceed as follows:

- 1) A conference will be held between the DI Director and appropriate representatives to determine remedial action.
- 2) The DI Director in consultation with appropriate representatives will provide in writing specific steps and actions that are to be required of the student.
- 3) The student will be allowed a period of time, not to exceed one (1) month (4 internship weeks), to meet the desired objectives and/or level of competency.
- 4) At this point, if the student does not meet the designated objectives, the student will be dismissed from the program. The DI Director determines whether or not the student has met the objectives. The student

will receive an unsatisfactory/failing grade in NUT 5900 Dietetic Internship.

Any student subject to discipline/termination review will be provided with appropriate remedial instruction during the remedial period by the DI Director and/or designee.

**A student may be subject to immediate dismissal from the program should the DI Director determine that the best interests of the Appalachian State University Dietetic Internship Program are jeopardized by the student's conduct. Examples of circumstances that could lead to immediate dismissal include but are not limited to illegal or unethical behaviors.**

Should a student become subject to discipline/termination review, the recommended action will be sent in writing to the Department Chair of NHM at Appalachian State University and to the student. Any recommended action must be approved by the Department Chair prior to implementation of the action.

Should the remedial period fall over a University Break, the student will receive an "I" (Incomplete) in NUT 5900 Dietetic Internship. The grade will be changed to either "S" (satisfactory) or "U" (unsatisfactory) at the completion of the remedial period, depending on the outcome of remediation.

Any student for whom it is determined that dietetics may not be an optimal career choice will receive guidance from the Program in regards to more appropriate career paths.

### **Extenuating Circumstances**

In the event that health status or another extenuating circumstance as determined by the DI Director interferes with an intern's ability to successfully complete the program, a conference will be held between the DI Director, the student (if able), and appropriate representatives to determine appropriate action. Proposed action must be approved by the Department Chair. Action could include postponement of placement in supervised practice facilities to a subsequent semester or year and/or assignment of a grade of 'incomplete', thus delaying the student's completion of the program. In the event of extenuating circumstances, the length of time allowed for program completion is extended to 36 months.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AFTER COMPLETION OF THE PROGRAM**

One purpose of completing the DI is to be eligible to take the Registration Examination for Registered Dietitians. In May, the Program Director will provide each student with a packet of materials to assist the student in completing the registration eligibility application process. A Name/Address Verification Form (CDR

copy) must be completed and returned to the Program Director upon program completion. The Program Director will submit this original form to CDR along with the registration eligibility application. Each student will receive from CDR an email confirmation of registration eligibility, along with instructions for arranging to take the Registration Exam.

Part of the professional responsibility of a DI graduate is to help the program meet the needs of future students. Four specific requests are made of the DI graduate:

1. Release Registration Examination scores to Appalachian State University
2. Complete and return Program Evaluation and Exit Interview (**Appendix O**); these requests/forms will be sent at various times prior to and after graduation
3. Complete and return the program competency evaluation (provided by DI Director at end of program)
4. Sign a form providing permission to the ASU DI to contact the student's first dietetics-related employer to ask their feedback on the degree to which the program prepared the student for entry-level dietetics practice. This survey is an evaluation of the program, not of the student.

Data will be reported in such a way as to preserve confidentiality. Such information is very valuable in enabling the faculty to evaluate and to improve the dietetic education program. It is in your best professional interest to help maintain a strong DI program at ASU.