



M.S. in Nutrition Sciences Program Handbook

Welcome

Congratulations on beginning your graduate education at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and welcome to the [Department of Kinesiology & Nutrition Sciences](#), M.S. in Nutrition Sciences Program. We hope that you will have many positive experiences and interactions during your time with us, and we hope that we can effectively assist you in your growth and development. For information and helpful links, visit the Department of [Kinesiology and Nutrition Sciences' Admissions Page](#).

Mission Statement

The mission of the UNLV MS in Nutrition Sciences is to provide program graduates with the skills and knowledge to be comfortable and competent nutrition and dietetics professionals capable of providing excellent nutrition and dietetic services in numerous community, food service, management, and clinical settings. The program will provide an evidence-based curriculum with a translation to clinical/professional practice.

Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide program specific information that is not found in the UNLV Graduate Catalog. Students are responsible for understanding and following the policies and procedures delineated in this document and the UNLV Graduate Catalog, as well as the NSHE Code, UNLV Bylaws, and the UNLV Student Conduct Code. Questions about policies should be directed to the Graduate College: valarie.burke@unlv.edu or gradassociatedean@unlv.edu.

Department Graduate Faculty

A current listing of the graduate faculty can be found in the [UNLV Graduate Catalog](#). Faculty must hold the appropriate level of approved graduate faculty status to be involved in graduate education at UNLV. For current information regarding graduate faculty status in the M.S. Nutrition Sciences Program, please contact the graduate Coordinator, Dr. Laura Kruskall, at laura.kruskall@unlv.edu.

Contact Information

Website: <https://www.unlv.edu/kns/academic-programs>

Department Chair: John Mercer, PhD, BHS 218A, john.mercer@unlv.edu

Graduate Coordinator: Laura J Kruskall, PhD, RDN, CSSD, LD, FACSM, FAND, BHS 330, laura.kruskall@unlv.edu

Department Main Office:

BHS 323, nutrition.sciences@unlv.edu, Phone: 702-895-4328, Fax: 702-895-2616

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This program is designed to meet the requirements of students wishing to become a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) and Licensed Dietitian in Nevada. In order to become an RDN students must:

- Complete the Didactic Program in Nutrition a Dietetics (DPND) requirements.
- Apply for, become accepted into, and complete an ACEND-Accredited Dietetic Internship.
- Pass the National Registration Examination for Dietitians.

NOTE: Effective January 1, 2024, students must hold a M.S. degree in order to sit for the National Registration Examination for Dietitians. UNLV does offer a M.S. in Nutrition Sciences degree, requiring application for admission after earning the B.S. degree.

NOTE: Once the RDN credential is earned, one may apply for their Dietetics license in Nevada. No additional courses or credentials are required to be eligible for the license to practice. This MS in Nutrition Sciences fulfills one of these steps. This degree alone, does not satisfy the requirement to become an RDN.

Currently preference for admission is given to those students who have completed the DPND. Students who have not completed the DPND may be considered, if there is room in the program.

[Please see UNLV Graduate Catalog for official admissions requirements.](#)

The current pre-req courses for application to the program are:

- CHEM 108 or CHEM 121/122/241
- BIOL 223/L (BIOL 189, 196, or 197)
- BIOL 224/L (BIOL 189, 196, or 197 AND BIOL 223/L)
- BIOL 241 (BIOL 189 or 196 or 197 and CHEM 108 or CHEM 121/122/241)
- MATH 124
- NUTR 223 (MATH 124 or higher (not MATH 132); CHEM 108; BIOL 189 or 196, or 197) (Co-req= NUTR 271)
- NUTR 301 (ENGL 101)
- NUTR 370 (NUTR 223)
- NUTR 451 (BIOL 224/L; CHEM 108; NUTR 311/L)

NOTE: Many of these courses also have their own pre-req courses required and require a student to be admitted as a PRE-NUTR undergraduate major then apply for the NUTR major in order to complete the upper division courses. Upper division NUTR undergraduate courses require a student to be admitted as a NUTR major). Pre-req courses are in parentheses next to the course above).

Students should identify an academic advisor prior to application to the program. Nutrition faculty for consideration are:

Laura Kruskall, PhD, RDN, CSSD, LD, FACSM, FAND. Director, [UNLV Dietetic Internship Program](#) & [UNLV Nutrition Center](#).

Arpita Basu, PhD, RDN, LD. Associate Professor.

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We are delighted you are interested in the profession of nutrition and dietetics. It is a rewarding field of study and practice.

Program Requirements

Program requirements regarding admission, coursework and culminating experience are found in the [UNLV Graduate Catalog](#).

Advisory Committee Guidelines

A Graduate Advisory Committee is mandatory and must conform to the Degree Progression Policies and Procedures provided in the graduate catalog. Applicants to the program are strongly encouraged to have a faculty member identified (cooperatively) to serve as their mentor/advisor prior to application to the program. This faculty member must have the appropriate Graduate Faculty status in the Department and be in good standing in the Graduate College. In addition to the faculty mentor/advisor who serves as the Chair of the thesis or professional paper committee, a minimum of two additional faculty from within the department with the appropriately approved Graduate Faculty status, also serve on the Advisory Committee. The Graduate College Representative, a faculty member with the appropriate Graduate Faculty status (Graduate Faculty Representative) outside of the Department of KNS, is also required to serve on the Advisory Committee. Thus, the Advisory Committee consists of a minimum of three faculty members from within the department and a fourth faculty member from outside of the department.

Degree Program Benchmarks

Students' can track their progress using Plan of Study Forms. Part I of the Plan of Study Form can be found on the Grad Rebel Gateway. Part II can be found in the Degrees Directory. It is required that you submit the Plan of Study Form Parts I and II before applying for graduation, but it is strongly recommended that you submit the form once you are about halfway through your graduate program. These forms require the approval of the advisor and the Graduate College.

The professional paper plus clinical case study/community intervention project prospectus document and meeting includes a draft outline/presentation of the student's concept for this option. The student will work with the committee chair for the level of detail required in this outline. The student's advisory committee may suggest changes or verbally approve the project concept. Following approval of the project concept, the student may proceed with the professional paper plus clinical case study/community intervention project. NOTE: This option will require that students work at a healthcare or community site. All sites must have an educational affiliation agreement (EAA) in place before the student may begin the project. If an EAA does not already exist, it can take quite some time for this process. Students may be required to complete a criminal background check, drug screen, and provide proof of various immunizations. This will be an additional expense for students. Students must comply with all facility (site) guidelines for access to the facility. Sites also have very strict dress and appearance codes that students must abide by (i.e. piercings, tattoos, and clothing).

The thesis prospectus precedes the research. At this time, the student presents their thesis proposal to their Advisory Committee in a public forum in both written and oral form. The Advisory Committee may accept the proposal as presented, recommend minor changes to the study design or methodology, or request that the student conduct a major revision and repeat the prospectus. Upon acceptance of the prospectus, the student is allowed to commence their research.

The final examination for the M.S. degree comes in the form of public oral defense of the written thesis or professional paper plus clinical case study/community intervention project. The Advisory Committee may extend the defense into cognate fields related to the subject topic. The Advisory Committee determines whether or not the student passes the defense

Program Timeline

It is anticipated that this program will require four semesters of graduate student enrollment at 6 to 9 credits per semester. A student may accelerate the timeline by taking additional credits during the summer semesters.

Professional Code of Ethics/Discipline Guidelines

UNLV Graduate College policy regarding academic integrity can be found in the [UNLV Graduate Catalog](#) and found at the [UNLV Office of Student Conduct](#) webpage. Students in the M.S. Nutrition Sciences Program also must abide by the [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Code of Ethics](#) and must agree to take the [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Pledge of Professional Civility](#).

Annual Review Procedures

Your advisor will evaluate your progress at the end of each semester. You may, at any time, request a meeting with your advisor to discuss any issues, problems, or concerns. We strongly encourage you to communicate with your advisor on a regular basis.

Each winter break and early spring term, graduate students are **required** to complete the Graduate Student Individual Development Plan (IDP) form. The review covers the prior calendar year and assesses student progress, and it establishes reasonable goals for the year ahead. Reported student data is shared with students' graduate coordinators and advisors to foster opportunities for discussion about students' strengths and weaknesses, accomplishments and next requirements, and mentoring plans so that students know what they need to do in order to progress successfully through their programs in a timely manner. Students who are graduating are also required to complete the form in order to record their achievements since the data is also used to track metrics related to the annual productivity of all students. This online form will be sent by the Graduate College to the student's Rebelmail account. The mandatory review covers the prior calendar year and assesses student progress while setting goals for the year ahead.

Program Information

Please see [Graduate Catalog](#) for program and degree requirements.

University Resources

[Leadership and Professional Development Academy](#)

The goal of the Professional Development Academy is to serve as a virtual resource providing support and many professional opportunities to UNLV graduate students. The Academy offers information about events and services such as graduate certificate programs, workshops, training sessions and career services. You can follow Academy activities via social media or look for regular updates on the website.

[Academic Success Center](#)

The goal of the Academic Success Center is to help students do well academically and complete their studies on time. They offer or will refer you to such programs and resources as tutoring, advising, skills testing, career exploration and more. They guide students every step of the way to the many established resources created to ensure they complete their educational goals. Learn more about the programs and services the center currently offers.

[Alumni Association](#)

With an alumni base 120,000 strong, the UNLV Alumni Association offers a variety of services and opportunities in support of alumni and their families. UNLV alumni are encouraged to support the values of higher learning through advocacy, involvement, and giving.

[Commencement Office](#)

Located in the UNLV Office of the Registrar, the commencement office is the last step in the graduation process. Please check with the commencement office for information on the commencement ceremony and your diploma; for all other information about graduate student degree completion and graduation, including thesis/dissertation requirements and doctoral hooding, please contact the Graduate College. It is the students' responsibility to ensure they apply for [graduation on time](#) and submit all required forms to the Graduate College. Questions regarding thesis/dissertation should be directed to the Graduate College [Student Services Team](#) and questions regarding required forms should be directed to the Graduate College [RPC Team](#)

[Office of Diversity Initiatives](#)

The vision of the Office of Diversity Initiatives is to advocate, promote, and support the advancement of equity, inclusiveness, and empowerment of a continuously changing collegiate and global community. The mission of the Office of Diversity Initiatives is to provide leadership and support for UNLV's diversity mission: *to nurture equity, diversity, and inclusiveness that promotes respect, support, and empowerment*. This Office also handles UNLV Title IX questions, inquiries, and reporting.

[Disability Resource Center \(DRC\)](#)

The DRC is committed to supporting students with disabilities at UNLV through the appropriate use of advocacy, accommodations, and supportive services to ensure access to campus courses, services, and activities. The DRC is the university-designated office that determines and facilitates reasonable accommodations in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Graduate students with disabilities must disclose to the DRC in order to receive appropriate accommodations.

[Office of International Student and Scholars](#)

International Students and Scholars (ISS) ensures compliance with both SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) and federal law, so that the university can continue to be authorized by the U.S. federal government to enroll international students; host and hire international scholars; assist and advise employment eligibility and authorization relating to international students and scholars, and visa, travel, and immigration issues; provide critical and specialized services to the international students and scholars of the UNLV community; and facilitate their transition to the campus and the U.S.

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Jean Nidetch Women's Center

The Jean Nidetch Women's Center is committed to creating a supportive and inclusive environment for all genders through programming, services, and advocacy for the UNLV community. The Women's Center has informational resources, brochures, and flyers for a variety of on and off campus organizations to help empower and protect yourself, and learn about your options. They also provide free tampons, pads, and condoms.

The Intersection

The Intersection is a one-stop resource for UNLV's highly diverse student body — a comprehensive multicultural center grounded in the academic life of our students. As an intersecting campus resource, the Intersection helps ensure students, particularly first-generation and students of color, successfully navigate their academic careers. Here, all members of campus can discuss their differences, discover their similarities, and build a shared sense of belonging.

UNLV Libraries

UNLV Libraries has always been more than books; they are about encouraging students and creating quality programs that elevate growth and learning. Please visit their website for important information about the services they offer to graduate students.

Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA)

The Graduate & Professional Student Association serves all currently enrolled University of Nevada, Las Vegas graduate and professional students. The GPSA maintains the Graduate Student Commons located in the Lied Library room 2141 and Gateway Building PDAC Room. The facility a working office equipped with a copier, fax, flatbed scanners, color laser printer, office supplies, and computers with printers and a small kitchen area. The GPSA is the graduate student governance body at UNLV; the GPSA Council consists of one graduate student representative from each graduate department, and they meet monthly. The GPSA also provides volunteer opportunities, sponsors social events, and supports graduate student research through the graduate research and travel grants program.

Office of Student Conduct

The Office of Student Conduct is a student-centered, service-oriented office located within the Division of Student Affairs. The Office of Student Conduct collaborates with the UNLV community to provide an inclusive system through enforcement of the *UNLV Student Code of Conduct* by:

- Promoting awareness of student rights and responsibilities;
- Establishing accountability for student choices;
- Creating opportunities for involvement in the process; and
- Striving to uphold the values and ethics that advance the common good.

Military and Veteran Services Center

The Military and Veteran Service Center is staffed with veterans and GI Bill-experienced staff to assist more than 1,000 veterans, dependents, active duty service members, National Guard members, and reservists. Their mission is to develop a welcoming, veteran-friendly campus environment that fosters academic and personal success.

The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office

The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office supports higher-education access and persistence by providing financial aid to eligible students. The office partners with student organizations, the UNLV Foundation, the Graduate College, and other external constituents to provide financial aid learning opportunities and scholarship support for graduate students.

Writing Center

This is a free service to UNLV students to help you with any writing project, from papers to creative writing, to resumes, and we can work with you at any stage of the writing process. The center can help you brainstorm, make an outline, work on your drafts, or just be a soundboard for your ideas. The center staff can assist you in person, or via the Online Writing Lab (OWL) page.

University Policies and Procedures

Graduate students are responsible for knowing and acting in accordance with UNLV Policies and Procedures. To view the most commonly referenced campus policies and procedures, you can refer to the [Graduate Student Handbook](#), and following websites:

- [Academic Integrity](#)
- [Activation for Military Service](#)
- [Change of Address](#)
- [FERPA/Privacy Rights](#)
- [Health Insurance - Mandatory](#)
- [Jean Clery Campus Safety and Security Report](#)
- [Proof of Immunization](#)
- [Policies and Procedures on the Protection of Research Subjects](#)
- [Rebelmail Policy](#)
- [Student Conduct Code](#)
- [Student Computer Use Policy](#)
- [Title IX](#)

UNLV does not discriminate in its employment practices or in its educational programs or activities, including admissions, on the basis of sex/gender pursuant to Title IX, or on the basis of any other legally protected category as is set forth in NSHE Handbook Title 4, Chapter 8, Section 13. Reports of discriminatory misconduct, questions regarding Title IX, and/or concerns about noncompliance with Title IX or any other anti-discrimination laws or policies should be directed to UNLV's Title IX Coordinator Michelle Sposito. The Title IX Coordinator can be reached through the online reporting form at [Title IX Reporting Form](#), by email at titleixcoordinator@unlv.edu, by phone at (702) 895-4055, by mail at 4505 S. Maryland Parkway, Box 451062, Las Vegas, NV, 89154-1062, or in person at Frank and Estella Beam Hall (BEH), Room 555.

To ensure compliance with Graduate College policies and procedures, please review the relevant sections of the [Graduate Student Handbook](#) :

- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [Academic Policies](#)
- [Admission and Registration Information](#)
- [Progression and Completion Policies \(listed alphabetically\)](#)

In addition, the [Graduate College website](#) contains additional information regarding policies and procedures.

Nothing in this handbook supersedes any NSHE, UNLV, or Graduate College policy.

Becoming a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) and Licensed Dietitian (LD)

Earning a M.S. degree in Nutrition Sciences will not grant you the eligibility to become a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) or Licensed Dietitian (LD) in Nevada. In order to become a Registered Dietitian/Nutritionist (RDN) students must:

- Complete the requirements from an ACEND accredited DPND.
- Apply for, become accepted into, and complete an ACEND-Accredited Dietetic Internship (Supervised Practice Program). There is currently a national shortage of dietetic internship positions. Match rates (acceptance) may be as low as 52% nationwide.
- The Dietetic Internship, supervised practice program requires that students be placed at various hospitals, community, and clinical sites. Students must complete a criminal background check, drug screen, and provide proof of immunizations to be permitted to participate at these sites. Sites also have very strict dress and appearance code that students must abide by (i.e. piercings, tattoos, and clothing). The UNLV School of Allied Health Sciences, Nutrition Sciences Program (DPND), cannot guarantee that affiliated hospitals, community, and clinical sites will allow the student to participate in patient/client care at these affiliate sites.
- Upon successful completion of the dietetic internship students are eligible to take the Registration Examination for Dietitians. More information about becoming an RDN and the registration exam can be found at: <http://www.cdrnet.org/certifications>
- NOTE: By the year 2024, students will need to have earned the M.S. degree in order to sit for the National Registration Examination for Dietitians.
- At this point, the M.S. Degree in Nutrition Sciences and the Dietetic Internship at UNLV are separate programs, yet work together to help students earn their RDN credential. Successful completion of the UNLV Dietetic Internship will provide students with six elective credits that may be used for the M.S. in Nutrition Sciences. The internship can be completed before the start or at the end of the M.S program. Becoming accepted into the M.S. in Nutrition Sciences does not guarantee a spot in the UNLV Dietetic Internship. The internship program is competitive.
- NOTE: Once the RDN credential is earned, one may apply for their Dietetics license in Nevada. No additional courses or credentials are required to be eligible for this license to practice: http://dphh.nv.gov/Reg/Dietitian/Dietitian_-_Home

Handbook Information

Date of Action	by	Comments
6/1/17	Laura Kruskall	Provided to Graduate Colleges
9/28/17	Laura Kruskall	Updated statement on role of program in RDN credentialing
8/6/18	Laura Kruskall	Updated faculty list and curriculum changes
3/30/20	Laura Kruskall	Updated curriculum changes, descriptions throughout, hyperlinks