Dietetic Internship Program

Structure of the Program

The UNLV Dietetic Internship (DI) is administered through the UNLV Department of Kinesiology and Nutrition Sciences. Both the DPND and Dietetic Internship are designed to provide well-trained, entry-level nutrition & dietetics professionals for the growing Southern Nevada region.

The UNLV DI has 2 concentrations to choose from: 1) Clinical Nutrition & Dietetics (1200 hours of supervised practice plus orientation completed in 32 weeks); 2) Food Insecurity-Food Banking (FI-FB) Concentration (1320 hours of supervised practice plus orientation completed in 35 weeks). Hours for the Food Insecurity and Food Banking supervised practice concentration will take place at the UNLV Food Pantry-Nutrition Center and may include, working with Three Square Food Bank, UNR Cooperative Extension, the Southern Nevada Health District, or other community organizations addressing food insecurity.

In order to become a Registered Dietitian/Nutritionist (RDN) students must:

- Complete the DPND requirements.
- Apply for, become accepted into, and complete an ACEND-Accredited Dietetic Internship (DI).
- Pass the National Registration Examination for Dietitians.
- NOTE: Effective January 1, 2024, students most 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.

The DI is designed to prepare interns to meet entry-level skills expected of the Registered Dietitian Nutritionist. In 2009 the UNLV DI received Full Accreditation from The Accreditation Council for Education and Dietetics (ACEND) of the Academy of Nutrition of Dietetics. The contact information for ACEND is listed below:

The Accreditation Council for Education and Dietetics
Academy of Nutrition of Dietetics
120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190
Chicago, IL 60606-6995
800/877-1600, ext. 5400
Interns must apply to the UNLV Graduate College as a non-degree seeking graduate student and will receive a total of 6 graduate credits. There is an application fee required for this process. Interns must be enrolled in NUTR 796 (Supervised Practice: Community Nutrition), NUTR 797 (Supervised Practice: Foodservice Management), and NUTR 798 (Supervised Practice: Clinical Nutrition). Upon successful completion of the program, these credits will become part of the official transcript and can be used as elective credit towards earning the M.S. degree in Nutrition Sciences at UNLV. Other institutions of higher education may choose to allow a transfer of these credits— it is up to that intuition. In addition to the supervised practice hours, an additional 15-20 hours per week will be required for preparation of the rotations and to complete assignments in fulfillment of the graduate courses. Upon successful completion of the DI, students will be eligible to take the National Registration Examination for Dietitians.

The program currently accepts up to 34 interns per year (up to 17 in each seven-month period). Up to 3 of the 17 interns are eligible to complete the FI-FB concentration. Of the 1200 hours, 680 are devoted to clinical experience, 240 to food service management, 240 to community experience, and 40 for an elective experience that is developed by the intern and approved by the preceptor. Students in the FI-FB concentration will complete an additional 120 hours devoted to this area. Below is an overview of the rotations with a sample schedule included. The community experience will take place at various sites in the Las Vegas community. For the food service and clinical rotations, interns will be placed at one of the several participating hospitals: Sunrise Hospital, St. Rose, Summerlin, Desert Springs, Southern Hills, Mountainview, Spring Valley, Henderson, Centennial Hills, Horizon Specialty, University Medical Center, Mountains Edge, the VA, or Dixie Regional Medical Center (St George Utah). Below is an overview of the rotations. Interns are assigned their sites for the program. Students are not required to locate their own learning sites unless desired in the elective week. Please note, students must choose an elective week at a site where an Educational Affiliation Agreement (EAA) is executed. If a student wishes to pursue another site, the DI Director must approve the site. Attempts will be made to obtain an EAA, but it cannot be guaranteed.

**Community Nutrition Overview**

The goal of the Community Component of the Dietetic Internship is to provide the intern with the opportunity to observe and gain information from a variety of diverse community nutrition programs as well as a more intensive work experience in one or two aspects of community nutrition programming. This format will provide each intern with the opportunity to observe the diversity within community nutrition and to actively participate in nutrition program development and implementation. Topics pertinent to all areas of practice such as professional development and the Code of Ethics will be covered in detail during the Community Rotation. The Community Nutrition Component of the dietetic internship will provide 240 hours of supervised practice. The time will be allotted as follows:

- 160 hours In Depth Learning divided between 2 learning sites
- 72 hours Multiple Site Overview Experiences
• 8 hours Classroom experience and presentation

**In Depth Single Learning Experiences**
Each intern will spend either 3 weeks (120 hours) at a single site followed by 1 week (40 hours) at a different site or 4 weeks (160 hours) divided equally between 2 sites. The In Depth Site Learning Experience provides the interns with the opportunity to participate in the development and implementation of nutrition programming to a greater degree than what is provided in a short 16-32 hour observation visit.

At each site the intern will learn about the mission and vision of the agency/organization, funding source, target audiences served and major program areas within the agency/organization. (s)he will also work on specific aspects of nutrition programming within the agency/organization. At one of the two In Depth sites each intern will also work on a specific project that culminates in a written and oral report. The oral reports will be scheduled for presentation in an upper division nutrition class; Community Nutrition in the Fall Semester and Food and Nutrition Law and Policy or Senior Seminar in the Spring Semester. This will provide an audience for the interns and an opportunity for undergraduate students to observe one component of the internship program. Depending on the particular project in which the intern is involved (s)he may participate in the needs assessment/planning component of a program under development, implementation of a new or existing program, program marketing or a program evaluation. The specific learning experience for each intern will depend on the particular agency/organization at which the intern spends his/her rotation and the programming of that agency/organization.

**Multiple Site Overview Experiences**
Each intern will spend 16-32 hours at individual sites providing nutrition services in the community. Learning experiences at these short-term sites will include observation and participation in short-term activities such as coding data, developing a marketing brochure, group presentations, or a resource review. The intern will also obtain information on mission, funding, target audience and major programs at each site (s)he visits. The goal of these rotations is to provide the intern with a broad perspective of the variety of nutrition programming in the community and the duties performed by an RDN at these various sites.

(Some agencies/organizations have agreed to provide both short-term and in depth experiences for interns. Assignments will be made such that an agency/organization providing an in depth experience for an intern will not provide a short term experience for that same intern.)

**Classroom Experience and Reports**
The interns will spend 8-16 hours participating in formal class sessions during their community rotation plus time spent giving their oral presentation to undergraduate students. Other meetings will be held occasionally throughout the internship experience. Part of the meeting time will be devoted to presentations by preceptors and guest speakers designed to provide additional background and knowledge to interns on specific nutrition and health topics. A
portion of the meeting time will be for interns to present case studies, project reports, or panel discussions for DPND students.

Competencies
Activities assigned at the In Depth Learning Sites and through classroom assignments will enable the interns to meet most, if not all, of the required competencies related to community programming and operation. Because of the unique nature of the activities performed by specific organizations/facilities or specific RDN's, these sites have been asked to specifically provide activities relative to meet the ACEND competencies.

Food and Beverage Management Rotation Overview
Each student will spend 6 weeks in the food service management rotation. Individual projects will vary and will be assigned by the preceptor at the start of the rotation. During the six-week period, interns will learn and acquire skills in the following areas:
Production (assessing inventory, ordering, deliveries/receiving, storage, production sheets, food production, entree preparation with patient survey); Tray line supervision for breakfast and dinner shifts (introduction, times, temperatures, scheduling, and presentation); Cafeteria, physician's lounge; Catering (operations, scheduling, presentation, cashier duties, food safety, cleanliness), and Diet Office/Diet Technician duties/supervision.

Clinical Rotation Overview
Each intern will spend 17 weeks in the clinical rotation. During the seventeen-week period, interns will learn and acquire skills in the following areas:
- Orientation to facility, diet office, and modified menu planning.
- Nutritional Screening and Assessment.
- The Nutrition Care Process and Medical Nutrition Therapy for various disease states (i.e. Outpatient Care, Weight Management, Diabetes Mellitus, Gestational Diabetes Mellitus, Cardiopulmonary Diseases, Gastrointestinal Diseases, Oncology, Orthopedics and Surgery, Rehabilitation and Neurology, Intensive Care and Nutrition Support, Renal Disease, Pediatrics, Trauma).

Elective Experience
Each intern will develop and idea for a one-week elective experience and will obtain approval from the DI Director and preceptor to complete this rotation.
UNLV Dietetic Internship Program
Sample Calendar- Subject to Change

### January Start Date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Rotation</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mid-January</td>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>UNLV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begin Mid-January</td>
<td>Food Service Management Experience Sharing-Competency Check in Assigned Hospital UNLV</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weeks 1-6</td>
<td>Clinical Nutrition &amp; Dietetics Experience Sharing-Competency Check in Assigned Hospital UNLV</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10-15</td>
<td>Community Orientation Community Nutrition Policy Day &amp; NVAND Reimbursement Representative Assigned In-Depth Site UNLV</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 15</td>
<td>Community Nutrition Community Presentations</td>
<td>Assigned Hospital UNLV</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weeks 16-31</td>
<td>Clinical Nutrition &amp; Dietetics Experience Sharing-Competency Check in Assigned Hospital UNLV</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weeks 30-31</td>
<td>Staff Relief Experience Sharing-Competency Check in Assigned Hospital UNLV</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Weeks 32-35 or throughout program</td>
<td>Food Banking</td>
<td>UNLV</td>
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### July 2018 Start Date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Rotation</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early July</td>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>UNLV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begin Early July</td>
<td>Food Service Management Experience Sharing-Competency Check in Assigned Hospital UNLV</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weeks 1-6</td>
<td>Clinical Nutrition &amp; Dietetics Experience Sharing-Competency Check in Assigned Multiple Sites UNLV</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10-15</td>
<td>Community Orientation Community Nutrition Policy Day &amp; NVAND Reimbursement Representative Assigned In-Depth Site UNLV</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Week 15</td>
<td>Community Nutrition Community Presentations</td>
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<td>Staff Relief Experience Sharing-Competency Check in Assigned Hospital UNLV</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Weeks 32-35 or throughout program</td>
<td>Food Banking</td>
<td>UNLV</td>
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**Food Insecurity-Food Banking Concentration:**
- Weeks 32-35 or throughout program | Food Banking | UNLV
Site Participation with the UNLV Dietetic Internship Program
Sites has been selected to participate in our UNLV Dietetic Internship Program due to many factors:

- The facility has an RDN/LD (or more) on staff who is dedicated to student learning through supervision and mentoring and is willing to formally assess student competence for entry level RDN work.
- The Hospital may be an official teaching hospital for UNLV. All facilities and community sites must execute an Educational Affiliation Agreement (EAA) for students to be on site. The UNLV DI Program Director, program staff, and UNLV Legal Counsel work with the facility to execute these agreements. These are kept on file with the UNLV Program Director and UNLV Office of the Provost.
- Preceptors must: 1) Be in good standing with CDR and hold the RDN credential; 2) Hold a license to practice dietetics in Nevada (LD); 3) Participate in continuing education; and 4) Complete a preceptor qualification form for UNLV.
- Students give formal feedback to the DI Program regarding their preparedness for entry-level practice, the facility, and the preceptors. UNLV has never had to dismiss a site. In fact, most students comment on the talented and skilled preceptors in our program. The DI Program Director will notify preceptors of any conflict or complaints.

Program Completion Requirements
Students must successfully complete all of the competencies and student learning outcomes as part of the DI curriculum. CLICK HERE FOR A LIST OF COMPETENCIES/STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES. Students/Interns are ultimately responsible for working with preceptors to ensure competencies are met. Our preceptors are very experienced with dietetic interns and the competencies. Interns are evaluated informally throughout each rotation and formally at the end of each rotation. Based upon the feedback received from the preceptor, the DI Director evaluates interns and decides if the intern has passed the rotation. The DI Director will be in close contact with each preceptor throughout the program.

Evaluation of Interns
Interns are evaluated regularly and frequently during their seven-month rotation. Informal evaluations take place in discussions between the DI Director and preceptors, and preceptors and interns on a regular basis. Formal, written evaluations will be competed at the end of each assignment or rotation, with input from the intern. Interns will be evaluated based on the specified competencies considered essential for an entry-level dietitian set by the ACEND accreditation Standards. Professional behavior and attitude will also be evaluated and documented in the evaluation form. Another evaluation will be completed by each intern to provide the DI Director with input as to the effectiveness of the program.

In the event of unsatisfactory performance during any of the rotations, the preceptor and DI Director consult to determine the format of a redirection plan to allow the intern to achieve the competencies. Inability to accomplish that plan may result in dismissal from the program.
Program Requirements and Selection of Interns

Students may apply for one or both of the concentrations. The Clinical concentration admits up to 14 students per round. The Food Insecurity/Food Banking Concentration admits up to 3 students per round. Students are evaluated and ranked separately for each concentration. Applicants are reminded to enter the proper code for the desired concentration(s) in D&D Computer Matching and must indicate the desired concentration(s) in the supplemental application. Applicants applying for both concentrations have the option of a) writing one personal statement for both concentrations, or b) writing a personal statement for each concentration, placing the second personal statement in the supplemental materials section of the DICAS application.

Successful applicants must meet the following minimum admission standards:

- A baccalaureate or advanced degree from a regionally accredited four-year college or university.
- Minimum overall GPA of 2.75 (4.00 = A) for the bachelor's degree. The 2.75 minimum GPA applies to the total, sciences, and DPND GPAs.
- Didactic Program in Dietetics Verification Statement or Intent to Complete Form.

If accepted into the DI Program, students must complete an application to the UNLV Graduate College to become a non-degree seeking student. This application can be found at http://graduatecollege.unlv.edu/prospective/non-degree/become_a_student/.

THIS STEP IS ONLY FOR ACCEPTED INTERNS. DO NOT COMPLETE THIS STEP AS PART OF THE APPLICATION PROCESS. There is a fee to apply.

Applications are reviewed by UNLV Nutrition Sciences faculty, one of which is the DPND Director and Community Preceptor. We examine GPA (science, DPND, and overall), work and volunteer experience, and letters of recommendation. Applicants are compared to others in the pool, so it is different each round. We often have had many high quality applicants, who excel in all three areas. The best thing to do is to make sure those areas are strong. We cannot disclose the information in your letters, so you must judge the quality of your letters by talking to the person you selected to write for you. Unfortunately, if your GPA is not stellar, then the only way to correct that is to re-take classes and we realize this is not an easy or inexpensive endeavor. Gaining experience is always an option and through that experience, it may be possible to gain strong letters.

Successful candidates are strong in all three areas and demonstrate exceptional skills through projects or experience. These individuals clearly demonstrate their skills, relate it to the internship, and are perfectly polished in the interview process.

If selected for an interview, applications are forwarded to our Hospital Preceptors. The interview is a panel with the DI Director, DPND Director/Community Preceptor and preceptors.
from our hospitals. Interviews can be done in person or via Skype and are 15-20 minutes in length.

If applying for both concentrations, students will be ranked separately in each of the two concentrations. It is possible to be interviewed for positions in one or both concentrations.

**Assessment of Prior Learning**
Completion of this program will not result in a graduate degree. Prior learning experience or earned credits from a graduate program cannot waive the requirement for registration into NUTR 796 (Supervised Practice: Community Dietetics), NUTR 797 (Supervised Practice: Food Service Management), and NUTR 798 (Supervised Practice: Clinical Dietetics). Registration in these courses is required in order to have access to university services.

Prior learning from employment will not be considered as a partial waiver of course credits or supervised practice hours. Interns with prior experience may be given assignments or projects that are appropriate for their background and that are most useful for the intern and the institution.

**Policy for Issuing the Final Verification Statement**
If the program completion requirements are met, the DI Director will issue the final Verification Statement and will follow the procedures established by the Commission on Dietetic Registration for submitting and verifying eligibility for the RD examination. Successful program completion includes completing the minimum required contact hours, earning at least a satisfactory rating on all competencies and student learning outcomes, completing an adequate learning portfolio, and completion of the CDR exit packet provided by the DI Director.

**Statement of Responsibility**
Each intern assumes all risks and is solely responsible for any injury or loss sustained while traveling to or participating in the UNLV DI, operated by the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, School of Integrated Health Sciences, at their rotation sites unless such injury or loss arises solely out of the sites gross negligence or willful misconduct.

**Student Responsibilities (To Allow Supervised Practice Experience at the Sites)**
Information for Students/Interns Who are Accepted into the Program. This is Subject to Change with Site Requirement Changes. Interns Accepted into the Program will Receive a Welcome Letter with Detailed Checklist. Interns Must Begin their Background Check, Drug Testing, and Immunization/Immunization Verification Upon Receipt of the Welcome Letter.

Students who are accepted into the program must abide by these processes and procedures:

1. The Program Assistant’s name is Dawn Matusz. She and the DI Director will be contacting you frequently, primarily through UNLV email. Please make sure you respond to our messages.
2. Once you are enrolled at UNLV, you will be given a UNLV email address. This is the address that will be used once the program begins. If you have another email address,
you may want to forward to your UNLV address since that is our method of communicating with you. You must respond to our email messages.

3. You will need to apply to the UNLV Graduate College as a non-degree seeking student. Go to: [http://graduatecollege.unlv.edu/prospective/non-degree/become_a_student/](http://graduatecollege.unlv.edu/prospective/non-degree/become_a_student/) and follow the instructions for Non-Degree Graduate Student Application. Once this is processed, you will receive an NSHE ID number. This number will allow you to register for courses. There is an application fee.

4. Once you are admitted to the Graduate College as a non-degree seeking student, you will need to enroll for three, two credit courses (NUTR 796, Supervised Practice: Community Nutrition; NUTR 797, Supervised Practice: Food Service Management; and NUTR 798, Supervised Practice: Clinical Nutrition). We will assist you in getting registered as the call numbers are not published.

5. You will be billed for program tuition and fees through MyUNLV. Once you have your NSHE number, you will have access to this. Please email Dawn if you need assistance.

6. You will have to complete a criminal background check and 8-panel drug screen through Pre-Check or Complio. You will be given instructions on which system to use. Immunizations must be submitted to this system and will be verified. You must be able to produce your immunization records to your assigned hospital and/or community site upon request. The cost is ~$120.

7. Obtain a food handlers card. This can be obtained through the Southern Nevada Health District. For more information about SNHD call 702-759-1000 or visit their website at [www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org](http://www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org).

8. You will need to be CPR/BLS certified through the American Heart Association.

9. Complete a two-step TB test. Many students choose to go to UNLV Student Health or the Southern Nevada Health District. For more information about SNHD call 702-759-1000 or visit their website at [www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org](http://www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org). You may choose another medical provider if you choose. PLEASE BEGIN THIS PROCESS NOW AS IT TAKES TIME.

10. Provide proof of immunizations (2-step TB, MMR, Rubeola, Chicken Pox (Varicella), Hep A & B, Tetanus & Diphtheria), medical insurance coverage, and a statement from your physician that you are in good health and that you can complete the DI. This letter needs to come from an MD, DO, or Advanced Nurse Practitioner (APN) (See above-immunizations will be submitted through the Pre-Check or Complio system).

11. A couple of you may need additional testing (it will depend on who I assign to which site). I will be working on that over the next several weeks. I will notify you if you need additional testing.


13. Student Membership in the Nevada Academy of Nutrition of Dietetics: Cost Varies. Free if selected as part of your national membership.


15. Provide a copy of your official DPND Verification Statement. This is the document you will receive from your DPND Director once you complete all of your coursework.
16. Provide a copy of your official transcript with degree posted. Please check with your university to see when degrees are posted.

17. Please plan on coming to UNLV at Noon on Tuesday July 2\textsuperscript{nd}. This is your orientation with me. Your rotations will begin on Monday July 8\textsuperscript{th} and will continue for 30 weeks (33 weeks for the FB-FI concentration). If you are not compliant with your paperwork and assignments, we cannot admit you to the internship. Parking permits can be purchased from UNLV Parking services. You may also use the parking meters. If you need to make copies of anything, you are welcome to come early and use our machine.

18. Fingerprinting.
   Metro's Fingerprint Bureau
   Students Need cash

19. A couple of you who will be working at the VA will need Federal Fingerprinting as well. Once I have the rotation schedules finalized, I will let you know if you are one of those interns. Please do not take care of this step until I notify you if you need local or Federal fingerprinting.

20. Lab Coat required.

21. Instructions will be given to pick up name tags and badges.

22. A UNLV Nutrition Sciences Polo shirt will be provided.

**Assignments & Preparation for the Internship**

1. Training for all Interns:
   - Online Training Through UNLV Risk Management:
     - http://rms.unlv.edu/occupational/training
     - Back Safety
     - General Workplace Safety
     - HIPAA
     - Blood Borne Pathogens
     - Radiation Safety for Radiation Producing Devices

2. Once you are registered, you will need to go to WebCampus/Canvas. This is accessible on the UNLV homepage. This is a website for the course.

3. Please purchase Cengage Unlimited for 12 months (separate instructions will be sent). You will be reimbursed in the form of a scholarship. You may add as many text books as you wish with your unlimited subscription. For example, in addition to the 2 books required below, you may add their MNT book, general nutrition texts, food science, food service etc books. You can access these for the full year.

4. Add Nelms Medical Nutrition Therapy- A Case Study Approach to your Cengage Unlimited Account. Access the Link to MindTap (Clinical Case Studies) in the Modules area of Webcampus. Complete these activities. You will also see these in the Assignments area, but I prefer to work in Modules.

5. Add Ehrlich Medical Terminology for Health Professions 8e- A Case Study Approach to your Cengage Unlimited Account. Access the Link to MindTap (Medical Terminology) in the Modules area of Webcampus. Complete these activities. You will also see these in the Assignments area, but I prefer to work in Modules.
6. I will be sending (or putting on your webpage) a few additional exercises for you to complete. You will need resources from your DPND Program to complete these (i.e. a Nutrition Assessment book, a MNT book, a medical dictionary, etc). Cengage has many great texts that you can add to your account at no additional cost!

**Required Materials**

Many books can be added to your Cengage Unlimited account

- General Science of Nutrition text.
- Medical Nutrition Therapy text.
- Nutrition Care Manual (Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics).
- A medical abbreviations handbook.
- A medical dictionary of your choice.
- Calculator.