



**Guide to ACEND-accredited nutrition
and dietetics education programs at
The University of Tennessee**

B.S. in Nutrition - Dietetics concentration

M.S. in Nutrition - Clinical Nutrition & Dietetics concentration

Department of Nutrition

College of Education, Health, & Human Sciences

Fall 2023

Table of Contents

Welcome Message.....	1
Becoming a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) – Overview.....	2
Mission and Goals of our Nutrition and Dietetics Programs.....	4
Application and Admission.....	7
Program Costs and Financial Aid Opportunities.....	9
Supervised Experiential Learning Integration and Progression.....	11
Program and Curriculum Overview Year by Year.....	13
Years 1 and 2.....	13
Year 3.....	14
Year 4.....	16
Year 5 – the Graduate Year.....	19
Information for students completing the Didactic Program in Dietetics only.....	22
Policies and Procedures.....	26

Welcome to Nutrition and Dietetics at the University of Tennessee!

Dear Student,

As we enter the 2023-2024 academic year, many wonderful changes are underway in nutrition and dietetics education at The University of Tennessee. In 2018, our application to develop a novel demonstration program to lead the way in the future of nutrition and dietetics education was accepted by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND). Since that time, we have worked hard to develop a creative and robust curriculum that will prepare students to confidently go forth as practitioners and leaders in the field.

Today, that effort is paying off as we are now able to offer to students the opportunity to complete a Bachelor of Science degree with a concentration in Nutrition-Dietetics *plus* Master of Science with a concentration in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics and be eligible to take the national credentialing examination to become a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN) in just five years. We are proud to have now graduated two classes! This unique combination of programs is competitive and begins integrating hands-on practice experience in the junior year of undergraduate study and builds from there as students move through the curriculum. By senior year, students make their first foray into the clinical setting at one of many Cherokee Health Systems clinic sites in the area under supervision of clinical program faculty. A variety of experiences follow that to develop expertise particularly in the clinical realm, but they also include a strong foundation in community nutrition and foodservice management. Students who do not enter this graduate program are well prepared for successful acceptance into a wide range of accredited supervised practice programs to become RDNs or can use their undergraduate training as a backdrop for further study in other areas of healthcare. We encourage you to explore this handbook thoroughly to gain a full understanding of what you can expect through pursuit of nutrition and dietetics education here at UT.

Our programs are accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics as a Didactic Program in Dietetics or DPD (the B.S. with a concentration in Nutrition and Dietetics) and as a Graduate Program in Nutrition and Dietetics or GP (the combination of senior year prerequisites and coursework with the M.S. with a concentration in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics). You may contact ACEND for additional information about accreditation:

Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190
Chicago, Illinois 60606-6995
Phone: 312-899-0040 ext. 5400
Email: acend@eatright.org
<https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend>

We hope the pages of this handbook will be a worthy guide for you as you navigate your educational path in nutrition and dietetics at the University of Tennessee. Please also follow our clinical nutrition and dietetics program (@utkclinicalnutr) and the UTK department of nutrition (@utk_nutrition) on Instagram. Go Big Orange!

Sincerely,

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Becoming a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) - Overview

Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs) are food and nutrition professionals who unite the science of nutrition with application of nutrition principles to improve health through interventions. These interventions include education and counseling at the community and individual levels as well as addressing nutritional aspects of medical problems in clinical practice. Many dietitians practice in acute care hospitals, long-term care facilities, and medical offices as members of the health care team or in community-based settings. They also work in corporate wellness, journalism, sports nutrition, and the food and nutrition industry, among others. Find out more about careers in nutrition and dietetics from the [U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics](#) and the [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics](#).

Educational requirements to become a credentialed RDN

Requirements to become a credentialed RDN include three steps:

- **Earning a degree:** Currently, the minimum degree earned in order to take the RDN credentialing exam is a bachelor's degree. However, **as of January 1, 2024, a minimum of a master's degree will be required in order to take the RDN credentialing exam.**
- **Completing required didactic coursework and supervised practice:** Students must complete an ACEND-accredited program or programs that encompass all required coursework as well as practice experience. This can involve completing 1) an ACEND-accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD, usually a bachelor's degree program) followed by completion of a completely separate ACEND-accredited supervised practice program (i.e. dietetic internship) OR 2) a single ACEND-accredited program that combines coursework with supervised practice to meet all requirements in one place.
- **Passing the RDN exam:** The national credentialing examination is administered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR). More information about this step can be found on the [CDR website](#). Many states additionally require credentialed individuals to be certified or licensed by the state prior to practicing in the profession. State licensure information can be found [here](#).

Note: In order to maintain the credential, RDNs must complete a minimum of 75 continuing professional education hours every 5 years.

Meeting educational requirements at UT

UT offers two programs accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND), which maximizes the opportunity for students to become credentialed as RDNs:

1. The M.S. with a concentration in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics *in combination with* the B.S. in Nutrition-Dietetics meets all educational requirements, including supervised experiential learning, such that graduates are eligible to take the RDN exam upon completion of the M.S. This program is currently accredited by ACEND as a Graduate Program in Nutrition and Dietetics (GP) and up to 20 students are accepted annually into the M.S. The program is competency based and is designed to provide >1,000 hours of supervised experiential learning in order to meet licensure and certification hour requirements for any state in which graduates choose to practice. Supervised practice experiences are planned and supervised by program faculty and preceptors in the Greater Knoxville area.
2. The B.S. program with a Nutrition-Dietetics concentration is accredited by ACEND as a Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD). As such, graduates are eligible to apply for ACEND-accredited supervised practice programs across the country and, following completion, are eligible to take the Registration Examination for Dietitians to become RDNs and active members of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. This is an excellent option for students who either choose not to apply to our M.S. program concentration in Clinical Nutrition & Dietetics or are not admitted. A current listing of ACEND-accredited dietetic internship programs and other supervised practice programs can be found [here](#).

Mission and Goals of our Nutrition and Dietetics Programs

As two separate, yet intertwined dietetics programs, the B.S. and M.S. each have a separate but complementary set of missions, goals, and objectives. These guiding principles for both programs emphasize evidence-based practice and leadership.

Mission, Goals, and Objectives of the M.S.

The mission of the Graduate Program in Nutrition and Dietetics (GP) is to effectively integrate didactic and experiential learning in a program that culminates in a graduate degree that effectively prepares graduates for evidence-based nutrition and dietetics practice, practice-based research, and professional mentorship and leadership as RDNs in an interprofessional healthcare environment to optimize the nutritional health of individuals, families and communities.

Program Goal #1: The integrated didactic and experiential learning curriculum will prepare graduates for effective evidence-based clinical nutrition and dietetics practice as credentialed Registered Dietitian Nutritionists.

Objective 1.1: At least 80% of program graduates complete program/degree requirements within 3 years.

Objective 1.2: Of graduates who seek employment, at least 85% are employed in nutrition and dietetics or related fields within 12 months of graduation.

Objective 1.3: At least 85% of employers who respond to the employer survey will report being very satisfied or better with performance of program graduates in entry-level nutrition and dietetics practice.

Objective 1.4: At least 90% of program graduates take the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists within 12 months of program completion.

Objective 1.5: The program's one-year pass rate (graduates who pass the registration exam within one year of first attempt) on the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists is at least 80%.

Program Goal #2: The program will prepare graduates to be effective members of an interprofessional healthcare team.

Objective 2.1: By the time of program completion, at least 85% of program graduates will report moderate-level or greater interprofessional beliefs, behavior, and attitudes as measured by the Interprofessional Socialization and Valuing Scale (2016).

Program Goal #3: The program will prepare graduates for mentoring and leadership roles in nutrition and dietetics.

Objective 3.1: At least 85% of program graduates will rate how well the program prepared them for mentoring and leadership as satisfactory or better.

Objective 3.2: At least 75% of graduates will occupy mentoring and/or leadership roles in nutrition and dietetics within 3 years of program completion.

Program outcomes data are available upon request by contacting program director Dr. Melissa Hansen-Petrik at phansen@utk.edu.

Mission, Goals, and Objectives of the Didactic Program in Dietetics (B.S.)

The mission of the Didactic Program in Dietetics is to promote understanding of the scientific underpinnings of nutrition and their translation to effective, evidence-based practice, thereby preparing graduates for supervised dietetics practice programs leading to eligibility for the CDR credentialing exam to become registered dietitian nutritionists, and to build future leaders in dietetics and nutrition to optimize the nutritional health of individuals, families, and communities within state, national, and global populations.

Program Goal #1: The program curriculum will prepare graduates effectively for supervised practice programs leading to CDR credentialing as Registered Dietitian Nutritionists.

Objective 1.1: At least 80% of program students complete program/degree requirements within three years (150% of the program length).

Objective 1.2: The program's one-year pass rate (graduates who pass the registration exam within one year of first attempt) on the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists is at least 80%.

Objective 1.3: At least 40% of program graduates apply for admission to a supervised practice program prior to or within 12 months of graduation.

Objective 1.4: At least 35% of program graduates are admitted to a supervised practice program within 12 months of graduation.

Objective 1.5: At least 80% of program graduates who apply for admission to a supervised practice program within four years of graduation will be admitted.

Objective 1.6: On average, supervised practice program directors will rate preparation of graduates in specific knowledge areas as "satisfactory" or better on program director surveys.

Objective 1.7: On average, program graduates will rate how well the program prepared them in specific knowledge areas as "satisfactory" or better on program graduate surveys.

Program Goal #2: The program will prepare graduates to practice at the highest level by emphasizing ability to read and appropriately apply nutrition research findings and evidence-based guidelines to practice and providing opportunities to participate in research.

Objective 2.1: At least 35% of program graduates, by the time of program completion, will have participated in research.

Objective 2.2: At least 15% of program graduates, by the time of program completion, will have presented research at the Exhibition of Undergraduate Research and Creative Achievement or state or national meeting.

Objective 2.3: On average, program graduates will rate how well the program helped them build knowledge and skills in their “ability to locate, interpret, evaluate and incorporate information from research literature and evidence-based guidelines into evidence-based practice.” as “satisfactory” (2) or better on program graduate surveys.

Objective 2.4: On average, supervised practice program directors will rate preparation of graduates compared to other students in their program in their “ability to locate, interpret, evaluate and incorporate information from research literature and evidence-based guidelines into evidence-based practice” as “above average” or better on program director surveys.

Program Goal #3: The program will prepare graduates for leadership roles in nutrition and dietetics.

Objective 3.1: At least 20% of program graduates who attain the RDN credential will hold professional leadership roles in nutrition and dietetics within five years of program completion.

Objective 3.2: On average, program graduates will rate how well the program helped them build “leadership skills” as “satisfactory” (2) or better on program graduate surveys.

Objective 3.3: On average, supervised practice program directors will rate “leadership skills” of graduates compared to other students in their program as “above average” or better on program director surveys.

Program outcomes data are available upon request by contacting program director Dr. Kathleen Price at kprice34@utk.edu.

Application and Admission

Academic performance in years 1-2

The undergraduate Nutrition-Dietetics program, as an ACEND-accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics, has established academic standards to assure students are competitive in applying to our M.S. in Nutrition with a concentration in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics, other graduate programs, or supervised practice programs in dietetics. These standards are comparable to those of similar programs across the country. They include:

- A minimum 2.8 cumulative GPA for entry into upper division coursework (years 3, 4)
- A minimum grade of “C” in NUTR-prefix (major) courses

Thus, academic performance in years 1-2 is critical to a successful and timely transition to all that comes beyond.

Application and admission to the M.S. with a concentration in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics

A student intending to enter the Master of Science program in Nutrition with a concentration in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics is required to complete coursework in the Nutrition-Dietetics concentration for the first three years of undergraduate study. At this point, students must apply for the Master of Science program and be accepted into the Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics concentration in order to enroll in specific prerequisite upper-division courses that will establish the knowledge and skill set necessary for the transition to graduate study and for meeting of ACEND-required competencies. Up to 20 students each year will be admitted to this M.S. concentration. Students who do not enroll in the Master of Science program may still complete the Bachelor of Science in Nutrition-Dietetics and the Didactic Program in Dietetics and apply for dietetic internships or other accredited supervised practice programs.

**Note: The programs are in the process of pursuing approval of an [accelerated combined bachelor's/master's program](#) format. If approved, this is expected to go into effect in 2024 and will modify the application and admissions process.*

Admission requirements for the Master of Science program with a concentration in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics include at minimum:

1. Academic achievement
 - a. Cumulative GPA: Considered.
 - b. Nutrition coursework: completion of NUTR 100, NUTR 302, NUTR 311, NUTR 314, NUTR 315, NUTR 316, NUTR 320, NUTR 321/322 or equivalent courses with grade of “C” or better.
 - c. Science coursework: completion of CHEM 122-123, CHEM 132-133, CHEM 260, BCMB 230, MICRO 210 or equivalent courses.
 - d. Other non-departmental coursework: CLAS 273; CMST 240; ENGL 295 or 360; approved FDSC course; KNS 350; PSYC 110; PUBH 201; STAT 201 or equivalent courses.
2. Submission of an online [application for admission](#) to the Graduate School by **May 1** prior to the senior year of undergraduate study in the B.S. Nutrition-Dietetics Concentration.

The entry term should be the summer of the following year. If this entry term is not yet available for application, applicants must coordinate with the program director regarding a modified process and timeline. The completed application must include current transcripts, a personal statement detailing experience as well as long- and short-term goals, and a resume. No recommendation forms are required for applicants in the UT undergraduate Nutrition program.

3. In-person interview with the program director and representatives of the program faculty shortly following the application deadline.

Admission decisions will be based upon meeting of listed admission criteria as well as completeness of application, clarity of written and oral expression, and expressed interest in pursuing a career as a RDN. Admission is competitive, and students accepted to the Master of Science program in Nutrition with a concentration in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics are required to follow the Nutrition-Dietetics concentration curriculum during the fourth year of the undergraduate program with the addition of HTM 445 and NUTR 426 Clinical Nutrition II Practicum and complete the Bachelor of Science degree. To maintain good academic standing for entry into the Master of Science program, students must successfully complete all required coursework as specified in the admission criteria, graduate with a Bachelor of Science degree, and meet entry requirements of the Graduate School.

Program Costs and Financial Aid Opportunities

Program costs are driven primarily by tuition and fees as well as room and board. The table below shows cost estimates based on the University’s “list price.” Students and their families are strongly encouraged to apply for financial aid opportunities, including grants and scholarships, that can substantially defray costs.

Expense type	In State	Out of State**
Undergraduate program costs years 1-4 combined		
Tuition and fees*	\$53,936	\$127,896
Housing and food	\$51,120	\$51,120
Transportation***	\$12,212	\$12,212
Books, supplies, miscellaneous	\$6,892	\$6,892
GP program fee (January of senior year for students admitted to the graduate program)	\$750	\$750
Estimated undergraduate total	\$124,410	\$198,370
Graduate program costs year 5		
Tuition and fees*	\$18,877	\$44,561
Housing and food	\$12,780	\$12,780
Transportation***	\$1,664	\$1,664
Books, supplies, miscellaneous	\$1,880	\$1,880
Estimated graduate year total	\$35,201	\$60,885
Total estimated program cost of attendance for B.S. and M.S. combined	\$160,111	\$259,755

*Tuition, fees, and other expenses listed here are based on the 2023-2024 academic year and are subject to change. These totals are list price and do not include financial aid opportunities such as grants, scholarships, and loans which may substantially reduce costs. Please see below for financial aid information and links.

**Students from states participating in the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Academic Common Market may be able to apply for approval to pay in-state tuition if there is not a comparable program in their home state. <https://www.sreb.org/academic-common-market>

***Transportation expenses will be variable. Estimates here are based on those included in the University’s estimated cost of attendance. Personal transportation will be necessary for travel to and from supervised experiential learning sites.

Books, Supplies, and Miscellaneous expenses include:

- Textbooks (5 years), laptop with internet capability (5 years), eNCPT subscription (2 years), EHR go subscription (1 year): Estimated \$5,000
- Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics student membership: \$174 (\$58/year x 3 years)
- Lab coat, chef coat, scrubs, varies by practice site: Estimated \$250+
- Health insurance: Variable
- Liability insurance: \$30 (\$10/year x 3 years)
- Physical, Immunizations, BLS Provider certification: Variable

- Background checks, drug screening: Variable

Financial Aid and Scholarships

Due to the time intensive nature of the graduate year of study, students in the Clinical Nutrition & Dietetics concentration are typically not eligible for teaching and research assistantships. However, students in all years of the program are strongly encouraged to apply for grant, scholarship, and other financial aid opportunities, particularly those through the University of Tennessee, our college, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation, state and local affiliates such as the Tennessee Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and Knoxville Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, and other organizations. Department of Nutrition faculty serve on the scholarships committee for UT scholarships offered through our College, and decisions are based on several factors including academic performance and progress as well as professional promise.

University of Tennessee Undergraduate Financial Aid:

<https://admissions.utk.edu/afford/financial-aid/>

University of Tennessee Graduate Financial Aid: <https://gradschool.utk.edu/costs-and-funding/>

University of Tennessee College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences Scholarships – **applications typically due by February 1:** <https://cehhsadvising.utk.edu/advising-resources/forms/scholarships/>

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation – **applications typically due in April:**

<https://eatrightfoundation.org/why-it-matters/scholarships/>

Tennessee Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics – **applications typically due in early**

November: <https://eatright-tn.org/applications/>

Supervised Experiential Learning Integration and Progression

One of the primary advantages of the Graduate Program in Nutrition and Dietetics design is the purposeful integration and progression of supervised experiential learning throughout the curriculum, such that students can immediately apply what they learn in the classroom to professional practice. Because our programs have been designed for the DPD and GP to align with each other throughout much of the undergraduate degree program, all undergraduates in Nutrition-Dietetics benefit from this approach. The professional practice areas include clinical, community, and foodservice management settings, with an emphasis on developing expertise in clinical practice.

Clinical Progression

Preparation. Coursework during spring of the junior year and fall of the senior year prepares all students in the Nutrition-Dietetics concentration in a stepwise fashion for entering clinical practice. This begins with developing nutrition assessment skills in an on-campus practicum with peers, community members, and/or trained “patients” and progresses to working with trained actors playing the role of patients in structured mock clinical scenarios. Students who do not enter the M.S. concentration in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics (GP) at UT will be well prepared for an ACEND-accredited supervised practice program, such as a dietetic internship.

Cherokee Health Systems. Cherokee Health Systems (CHS) clinics provide the foundation for clinical experiences in the GP, with students maintaining a regular clinic schedule from spring of the senior year through each semester of graduate study. CHS is a large comprehensive community healthcare organization that is both a Federally Qualified Health Center and licensed Community Mental Health Center that includes integrated primary care and behavioral care offices in 13 counties in East Tennessee. They serve a patient population that is both ethnically and culturally diverse using a multidisciplinary team approach in which medical, behavioral, and other health care professionals work together to provide preventive care, primary health care, health behavior assessments, and interventions. The CHS experience begins with close supervision and oversight by clinical faculty and experienced graduate student mentors. In their final semester, graduate students play a key role in mentoring undergraduate students as they make first steps toward learning clinic operations and patient care. See more information about CHS [here](#).

Acute Care. Clinical experience for GP students gained through Cherokee Health Systems will be augmented with robust experiences in select hospitals and healthcare facilities in the Knoxville area. It begins with a 5-week introduction to acute care experience in a hospital setting during summer of the graduate year. Students have the opportunity to select additional acute care elective experiences based on individual interests and availability. These have included advanced general acute care, critical care/nutrition support, and pediatric acute care. These experiences will be scheduled during the summer and fall and/or spring of the graduate year.

Additional Clinical Electives. Students have the opportunity to also select additional outpatient clinical electives in a wide range of areas, depending upon individual interests and availability during a given year. These electives have included bariatrics, dialysis, disordered eating, endocrinology, gastrointestinal diseases/disorders, and oncology. UT Athletics is also an option

that incorporates both clinical and foodservice management skills. These electives are scheduled during fall and spring of the graduate year.

Community Nutrition Progression

All Nutrition-Dietetics students begin exploration of community nutrition through an introductory course in fall of the senior year. Additionally, a concurrent practicum course provides the opportunity for students to gain practical community experience, often with nutrition education programs geared towards children. This practicum experience is required for all students completing the DPD only, and those in the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences Service Learning Honors program. Those matriculating into the GP are encouraged to take it as an elective as experience gained in this course will count towards supervised practice hours in the GP, though it is optional.

Students accepted to the GP take additional coursework in community nutrition assessment, planning, and intervention and undertake supervised experiential learning in a variety of community nutrition practice settings during the summer of the graduate year.

Foodservice Management Progression

All Nutrition-Dietetics students lay a strong foundation in management through enrollment in a combination of a foodservice operations management course and a practicum in cooperation with Vol Dining (Aramark) on the UT campus during fall of the senior year. The practicum provides the opportunity for students to experience several aspects of a large-scale foodservice operation. In the spring, all students take a follow up course that addresses a number of management areas, including human resource management, risk management, budgeting and finance, and more. These three courses fulfill several accreditation requirements for both the DPD and GP.

Students accepted to the GP continue to grow management skills through two additional courses. During spring of the senior year, they enroll in a course where they apply their management skills through playing a variety of management roles that include responsibilities such as menu planning and food procurement as well as personnel management in a fine dining operations course. The final step in the progression entails a focus on management in healthcare foodservice operations, which is scheduled on site in a healthcare facility during the final semester of graduate study.

Program and Curriculum Overview Year by Year

Years 1 and 2

What to know – years 1 and 2 overview

The first two years of undergraduate study lay a foundation critical for success. They center on completion of general education requirements as well as foundational courses in the sciences. This purposeful design means not only optimal preparation for upper-level courses, but also that coursework during these two years can transfer easily from two- and four-year institutions so that transfer students, with careful planning, can walk right into year 3 of the curriculum.

Because the schedule beginning spring of year 3 becomes *less* flexible due to the integrated curriculum and start of practicum courses, years 1 and 2 and into fall of year 3 are the best times to complete electives or minors of interest or to study abroad. For students who are interested in particular electives, minors, or study abroad, early planning and close coordination with academic advisors is extremely important. See below for more details.

Options – getting ahead

The overall program curriculum is highly sequential, but during years 1-2 there is some flexibility for taking required courses ahead of schedule. While this doesn't speed students any more quickly through the curriculum, it can open up space for electives in later semesters and make select minors possible. This option should be carefully discussed with an academic advisor to understand how taking courses early may impact financial aid throughout the undergraduate career. Courses that can be taken early include:

- NUTR 302 – spring of year 1 or 2 following successful completion of NUTR 100
- CLAS 273 – offered online all terms
- FDSC 100, 241, or 410 – suggested for students interested in the Food Science minor. HTM 101 can be used as the food science course requirement and will count towards the Culinary Arts minor.
- HTM 210 – suggested for students interested in the Culinary Arts minor
- PUBH 201 – suggested for students interested in the Public Health minor

Options – minors

There are a number of minors complementary to study in Nutrition and Dietetics, which can be selected based on personal interests and career goals. Since these can be difficult to fit into the curriculum, students are highly encouraged to begin working with their academic advisor early for careful planning. Here are a few potential minors that may be of particular interest. For more details, see the listing of minor requirements in the [current undergraduate catalog](#).

- Business Administration
- Child and Family Studies
- Communication Studies
- Culinary Arts
- Food Science
- Hispanic Studies
- Journalism and Electronic Media
- One Health
- Psychology
- Public Health
- Sustainability

Options – study abroad

Study abroad experiences provide an amazing means of building global perspective. They can also be quite challenging to integrate into a pre-professional curriculum such as ours. For that reason, students who have this interest are highly encouraged to plan ahead, work closely with their advisors very early on, and consider study abroad opportunities during years 1-2 of undergraduate study or summer experiences any time prior to year 4. Study abroad coursework may be a good opportunity to fulfill general education course requirements. It is also possible to find summer study abroad experiences that focus on cultural foods or agriculture. To get started, see more information from the [Programs Abroad office](#).

Options – take coursework that will transfer

Students may choose to take courses that will transfer into UT to meet some or all of the requirements for years 1-2. To be sure the courses students plan to take will transfer as expected, students should first check [UT's transfer equivalency tables](#) as part of their planning process.

Curriculum years 1-2

The only nutrition course that needs to be completed during years 1-2 is an introductory level course (NUTR 100; see course description below). Once this is successfully completed, students are eligible to enroll in the next course - NUTR 302 Life Span Nutrition – in spring of year 1 or spring of year 2 if they wish. Normally, NUTR 302 is scheduled for spring of year 3.

NUTR 100 Introductory Nutrition (3) Nutritional concepts, current consumer issues in nutrition, nutritional needs through life cycle, and international nutrition concerns and/or issues. *Satisfies Volunteer Core Requirement* (NS). Offered all terms with multiple times and online options.

Overall course requirements for years 1-2

NUTR 100: Introduction to Nutrition

CHEM 122, 123, 132, 133, and 260: General Chemistry I and II with Laboratories, Foundations in Organic Chemistry

BCMB 230: Human Physiology

MICR 210: Allied Health Microbiology

PSYC 100: General Psychology

STAT 201: Introduction to Statistics

Volunteer Core coursework – see [current catalog](#)

Coursework for selected minors or general electives

Year 3

What to know - year 3 overview

Year 3 begins focused study in nutrition and dietetics. At the start of fall, students will participate in an upper division orientation session for an overview of what to expect and how to be successful. This is the first year in the curriculum that Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics student membership, health screening and vaccination records, background checks and drug and alcohol screening, and purchase of liability insurance are required. Each of these requirements must be in

place by the end of the first full week of classes in the spring semester and continue through to program completion. See the Policies and Procedures section of this handbook for details. The fall semester features physiological biochemistry, which bridges the general science background with more focused nutrition content in the spring. Students also enroll in key non-departmental courses to broaden their perspective. In the spring, students will find themselves enmeshed in all things nutrition, including the first practicum course.

The summer after this year is prime time for taking the GRE if needed for external program applications and/or investigating supervised practice programs (i.e. dietetic internships) offered through institutions outside of UT.

Curriculum year 3

Fall semester

NUTR 311 Physiological Biochemistry (4) Biochemical principles underlying physiological events in animals. Metabolism of carbohydrates, lipids, proteins, and nucleic acids. Role of vitamins and minerals as coenzyme and prosthetic groups. Action of drugs and hormones. *(RE)* *Prerequisite(s): Biology 160 or Biochemistry and Cellular and Molecular Biology 230.* Typically Fall only.

CLAS 273 Medical Terminology (3) Extensive introduction to the language of medicine. This is an online course.

FDSC course – choose ONE:

- **HTM 101: Principles and Science of Culinary Arts (3)** Scientific principles involved with selection, preparation, and evaluation of quality food. *Contact hour distribution: 2 hours lecture and 2 hours lab each week.*
- **FDSC 100 Science of Food (3)** Introduction to food science, basic principles of food science. Satisfies Volunteer Core requirement (NS).
- **FDSC 241 Food Preservation and Packaging (3)** Principles, methods, and equipment used for preservation of foods. *Contact Hour Distribution: 2 hours lecture and 1 lab.*
- **FDSC 410 Food Chemistry (4)** Reactions of water, proteins, lipids, carbohydrates, minerals, enzymes, vitamins, and additives in foods. *(RE) Prerequisite(s): CHEM 260.*

KNS 350 Physical Activity Epidemiology (3) Epidemiological examination of the relationship of physical activity with the morbidity and mortality of chronic diseases and related risk factors. This course is offered as a completely online course. All assignments, quizzes, and examinations will be completed and submitted online in a weekly paced format. *(RE) Prerequisite(s): KNS 200 or NUTR 100.*

PUBH 201 Introduction to Public Health (3) Aspects of public health including discussion of contemporary and controversial health issues. ***Satisfies Volunteer Core Requirement:*** (EI, SS). This course is offered as a completely online course.

Spring semester

NUTR 302 Life Span Nutrition (3) Physiological development and psychosocial factors that influence nutrient needs and nutrition behaviors of individuals across the life span. Nutrition education strategies for various age groups. *(RE) Prerequisite(s): 100.* Spring only.

NUTR 314 Energy Metabolism and Metabolic Integration (3) Integration of carbohydrate, fat, and protein metabolism as applied to nutrient utilization and requirements in humans. *(RE) Prerequisite(s): NUTR 311 or BCMB 401.* Typically spring only.

NUTR 315 Nutrition Assessment (2) Introduction to the Nutrition Care Process, including validated malnutrition risk screening tools, with a focus on mastering knowledge of all domains of the nutrition assessment. Introductory pharmacology and dietary supplements will be addressed. *(RE) Prerequisite(s): NUTR 100 and 311, BCMB 230, CLAS 273. Corequisite(s): NUTR 302, 314, 321, 322.* Spring only.

NUTR 316 Nutrition Assessment Practicum (1) Hands-on experiential training and practice in nutrition screening and across nutrition assessment domains; orientation to the electronic health record; electronic Nutrition Care Process Terminology (eNCPT); case practice in basic nutrition assessment and diagnosis and documentation. Includes 45 practicum hours. *(RE) Prerequisite(s): NUTR 100 and 311, BCMB 230, CLAS 273. Corequisite(s): NUTR 302, 314, 315, 321, 322. Satisfies Volunteer Core requirement (EI).* Spring only.

NUTR 320 Nutrition Research Design and Methods I (2) Scientific method, basic study design, identifying primary research, critically evaluating peer-reviewed scientific nutrition literature, introduction to evidence-based guidelines. *(RE) Prerequisite(s): NUTR 100, STAT 201.* Spring only.

NUTR 321 Vitamins in Human Nutrition (1.5) Nutritional and biochemical significance of vitamins as it pertains to human health and disease. First session semester course. *(RE) Prerequisite(s): NUTR 100. Corequisite(s): NUTR 322.* Typically spring only.

NUTR 322 Minerals in Human Nutrition (1.5) Nutritional and biochemical significance of minerals as it pertains to human health and disease. Second session semester course. *(RE) Prerequisite(s): NUTR 100. Corequisite(s): NUTR 321.* Typically spring only.

Year 4

What to Know – year 4 overview

Admissions: The deadline to apply for the M.S. concentration in Clinical Nutrition & Dietetics takes place summer before senior year and varies based on when the university's [graduate school application](#) opens. Students should check periodically or will be notified when the application is available. The official entry term is summer the following year. ***Note: this process is expected to change in 2024 if the planned transition to an accelerated combined bachelor's/master's degree format is approved.**

Admissions interviews will take place between May and August. The program is accredited for up to 20 students in each cohort year. Students selected for the program will have the option to forgo enrollment in NUTR 413S in the fall as community nutrition practicum experience will also occur within graduate coursework. NOTE: Students completing the CEHHS Service Learning Honors Program must complete NUTR 413S.

AHEC Scholars opportunity: Students admitted to the M.S. program in Nutrition with a concentration in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics have the unique opportunity to be named [Area Health Education Center Scholars](#) through UT's partnership with Cherokee Health Systems. Participation in this opportunity is strongly encouraged! Applications must be submitted immediately after acceptance to the M.S. program as the AHEC Scholars program begins the first week of September. The program includes a two-year commitment to participate in 40 hours of team-based, interprofessional clinical exposure and 40 hours of didactic learning each year focused on the following core areas:

- Patient-centered clinical practice transformation
- Interprofessional education
- Cultural competence
- Social determinants of health
- Behavioral health integration
- Virtual learning/telehealth
- Connecting communities and supporting health professionals
- Current/emerging health issues

Since the program already includes more than the minimum of 40 hours clinical experience in CHS clinics each year, everyone will already meet that requirement as part of the master's program. The additional didactic learning includes interaction with health professional students from outside nutrition through monthly virtual sessions as well as webinars focused on the core areas. This additional 40 hours/year can count toward SEL hours. Students completing all requirements receive a \$500 participation award at the end of year one and another \$500 participation award at the end of year two. Please contact [Dr. Price](#) for more information or questions related to this unique opportunity.

Fall coursework: During the fall semester, students can expect a great deal of time to be devoted to experiential learning. The trio of courses made up of Clinical Nutrition I, Clinical Nutrition I Practicum, and Nutrition Education and Counseling are coordinated with each other to help students build skills in a logical sequence. The lecture course (NUTR 415) will explore key chronic disease conditions in depth including obesity and weight management, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and cancer. Concurrently, students will build upon their nutrition assessment skills from the prior spring semester by exploring these more disease specific and complex conditions through case studies, role play, and simulation with standardized patients through 3 hours each week in the practicum (NUTR 425). Students will also be learning and practicing nutrition education and counseling techniques with peers (NUTR 422). Students will additionally enroll in a Food and Nutrition in the Community (NUTR 412) course, which has an accompanying practicum (NUTR 413S) that is optional for students who will be completing the M.S. concentration in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics. During the fall students will also ground themselves in an understanding of foodservice operations in HTM 210 while concurrently spending 3 hours each week learning

foodservice operations on the ground through a cooperative effort with Aramark dining on the UT campus. The fall semester will also feature a professional issues course, which covers key content as students prepare to enter the practice arena.

Spring coursework: The spring semester includes three courses that all students will take. Two additional courses are intended only for students admitted to the M.S. concentration in Clinical Nutrition & Dietetics. Students in the DPD who are not matriculating into the M.S. have the opportunity to complete minors or take other electives during this final semester. Courses for all students include the second installment (NUTR 416) of the clinical nutrition lecture series, which delves into more complex disease states such as those affecting the gastrointestinal system, liver and pancreas, pulmonary system, and others. All students will also enroll in a course on nutrition and dietetics management (NUTR 403) and the second research methods and design course (NUTR 420), which culminates in a scientific poster presentation of a research proposal project.

Students who will be starting the M.S. concentration in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics in the summer must enroll for the spring in their first clinical practicum with Cherokee Health Systems (NUTR 426). During the fall semester leading up to this time, students must complete required training, background checks and drugs screens, and also submit required documentation to receive a badge and medical record access. Documentation includes vaccination records (must be up to date including current flu vaccine), TB test, driver's license, health insurance, head shot for badge, and current resume. NUTR 426 begins with a primary care boot camp after which students spend part of the semester one day each week (Monday, Wednesday, or Friday) in the clinic setting under the supervision of a clinical faculty member with mentoring by a graduate student or students enrolled in NUTR 527. Towards the end of the semester, NUTR 426 includes an acute care boot camp to facilitate transition of students from the primary care setting to hospital inpatient setting. They will also enroll in HTM 445, during which time they will gain hands on foodservice management experience in both front of the house and back of the house operations. This course meets in 3-hour blocks on both Tuesday and Thursday.

Fall Semester

NUTR 410 Professional Issues in Nutrition and Dietetics (1) Code of ethics, professional behavior including leadership/teamwork, scope of practice/standards of professional practice, governance, licensure, payment systems (coding/billing), development of professional e-portfolio. Fall only.

NUTR 412 Food and Nutrition in the Community (3) Influence of health characteristics, geographic, social, economic, educational, and cultural factors on food and nutrition programming. Relationship of community food and nutrition problems to programs and services for families and communities with particular attention to disease prevention and public policy. *(RE)*
Prerequisite(s): NUTR 302. Fall only.

NUTR 413S Food and Nutrition in the Community Practicum (1) Application of principles of concepts introduced NUTR 412 (Food and Nutrition in the Community). Students will work in the community. Successful completion of 20 hours of service learning is required. *(RE)*
Prerequisite(s): NUTR 302. (RE) Corequisite(s): NUTR 412, 415. Satisfies Volunteer Core requirement (EI). Fall only.

NUTR 415 Clinical Nutrition I (3) Nutritional genomics in practice; obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and cancer risk factors, prevention, pathophysiology, treatment, and evidence-based nutrition intervention. *(RE) Prerequisite(s): NUTR 314, 315, 321, 322. Satisfies Volunteer Core requirement (EI).* Fall only.

NUTR 422 Nutrition Education and Counseling (3) Introduction of communication, education, and counseling skills for aiding change in eating habits, with emphasis on skill development in client-centered counseling, using the Nutrition Care Process as a framework. *(RE) Prerequisite(s): NUTR 315, 316. (RE) Corequisite(s): NUTR 415.* Fall only.

NUTR 425 Clinical Nutrition Practicum I (1) Case-based experience in nutrition intervention for obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. Progression in practice experience from peer simulations to work with standardized patients for integration of nutrition education and client-centered nutrition counseling. Use of the electronic health record and application of evidence-based practice guidelines. *(RE) Prerequisite(s): NUTR 315, 316. (RE) Corequisite(s): NUTR 415, 422.* Fall only.

NUTR 430 Foodservice Management Practicum (1) Hands-on experience rotating through various positions in a largescale foodservice operation. *(RE) Corequisite(s): HTM 210.* Fall only.

HTM 210 Foodservice Operations Management (3) Principles of menu development, equipment selection, layout, purchasing, production, and service of food in volume. Offered both fall and spring, with Nutrition-Dietetics students generally enrolled in fall, though this course could be taken any time up to and including fall of year 4.

Spring semester

NUTR 403 Nutrition and Dietetics Management (3) Management with specific application to nutrition and dietetics practice settings including: foodservice systems, leadership, marketing, organizational design, facilities planning and design, quality improvement, human resources, budgeting and financial resources, and strategic management. *Nutrition majors only. Recommended background: HTM 210.* Spring only.

NUTR 416 Clinical Nutrition II (3) Introduction to methods and calculations in nutrition support. Diagnosis, pathophysiology, management, evidence-based guidelines for nutrition intervention, and case scenario discussion of diseases and disorders including those of the GI tract, liver and biliary system, exocrine pancreas, neurological diseases and disorders, pulmonary disease. *(RE) Prerequisite(s): NUTR 415.* Spring only.

NUTR 420 Nutrition Research Design and Methods II (2) Reading and interpretation of the nutrition research literature, including statistics. Development of skills in asking a practice question, planning data collection, collecting and analyzing data to inform future nutrition and dietetics practice. Understanding ethics in human research. *(RE) Prerequisite(s): CMST 240, NUTR 320 and STAT 201. Satisfies Volunteer Core requirement (AOC, EI).* Spring only.

Spring semester - Additional courses required for students admitted to the M.S. with a concentration in Clinical Nutrition & Dietetics

Students who have been admitted to the M.S. concentration in Clinical Nutrition & Dietetics are required to enroll in two practicum courses during spring of the senior year, where they will begin supervised experiential learning in a Cherokee Health Systems clinic and also spend two days each week learning hands on management skills in both the back and the front of the house with the Ready for the World Café in HTM 445. Nutrition-Dietetics students who are NOT entering the M.S. concentration in Clinical Nutrition & Dietetics should plan to enroll in elective hours.

NUTR 426 Clinical Nutrition II Practicum (2) Introduction to clinical nutrition practice application in a community healthcare setting. *(RE) Prerequisite(s): NUTR 315, 316, 415, 422, 425. (RE) Corequisite(s): NUTR 416.* Spring only.

HTM 445 Advanced Food Production and Service Management (3) Application of management concepts in menu design, personnel, cost control, and production and service of food. *Contact Hour Distribution: 2 hours and 1 lab. (RE) Prerequisite(s): HTM 210.* Offered both fall and spring with Nutrition majors scheduled for spring.

Year 5 – the Graduate year

What to Know – year 5 overview

During the year of graduate study, students will spend much of their time in the practice setting. Students can expect to be in the field full time during their two full-session practicum courses focused on community nutrition and on clinical nutrition. The clinical experience will entail one day each week in a Cherokee Health Systems clinic for the duration of the summer. On the other 4 days each week, students will each spend 5 weeks in an acute care hospital learning about clinical RDN practice as part of the healthcare team and building skills in several areas including nutrition risk screening/prioritization, malnutrition diagnosis, intervention, and monitoring, and nutrition support. Students will also spend 5 weeks in a community nutrition practice setting.

Acute care hospitals where students have been scheduled:

- East Tennessee Children’s Hospital
- Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center
- Methodist Medical Center of Oak Ridge
- Parkwest Medical Center
- Roane Medical Center
- Tennova North Medical Center
- Tennova Turkey Creek Medical Center
- UT Medical Center

Community nutrition practice sites where students have been scheduled:

- Beardsley Farm
- Nourish Knoxville
- Second Harvest Food Bank
- UT Extension

During the fall semester, students will continue in a Cherokee Health Systems clinic one half day each week along with ongoing off-campus acute care and other clinical elective experiences as part of NUTR 526. On campus coursework will include the final installment of the clinical (NUTR 525) nutrition lecture course trilogy, a community nutrition course with practicum (NUTR 503 and 514), and a course on the global food supply and sustainability (AGNR 480) offered by the Herbert College of Agriculture. [Admission to candidacy forms](#) must be submitted to the Graduate School as soon as grades are posted in order to graduate in the spring. See the [Graduate Catalog](#) for information and form link. Once students have been admitted to candidacy, they must apply to graduate through MyUTK. Please refer to the [Graduate Catalog](#) and [Department of Nutrition Graduate Handbook](#) for details.

Clinical elective options for fall and/or spring have included:

- Advanced acute care/staff relief (Parkwest Medical Center, UT Medical Center)
- Aramark on the UT campus (focus on food allergies)
- Critical care/metabolic support (Fort Sanders Regional, Tennova North)
- East Tennessee Children’s Hospital – introduction
- East Tennessee Children’s Hospital – specialty focus (i.e. CF, oncology)
- Endocrinology Associates of East Tennessee – focus on diabetes management
- Focus Treatment Centers – tour and/or disordered eating inpatient facility visit
- Fresenius Dialysis – center-based and home-based dialysis for CKD
- GI for Kids – gastrointestinal diseases and disorders
- Moon Nutrition Therapy – focus on motivational interviewing, children, adolescents, young adults, disordered eating behaviors, sports performance
- Thompson Cancer Survival Center – outpatient oncology
- Thompson Proton Therapy – outpatient oncology
- University Bariatrics – includes observation of classes, motivational interviewing for lifestyle change, post-surgery follow up
- UT Athletics – includes clinical and foodservice components
- UT Medical Center – adult cystic fibrosis clinic
- UT Medical Center – neonatal intensive care
- UT Medical Center – oncology with inpatient/outpatient

The spring semester represents the culmination of the program, during which time students will refine their skills in preparation for beginning professional practice. NUTR 527 incorporates mentoring training and time at Cherokee Health Systems clinics where graduate students actively mentor senior-level students enrolled in NUTR 426 Clinical Nutrition Practicum I. Graduate students will have the opportunity for additional clinical electives and will conclude NUTR 527 with a focus on the job search, interview process, and RDN exam preparation. Students will finalize and present their clinical nutrition practice project as part of NUTR 520 and also wrap up community nutrition experience with a focus on intervention and evaluation through completion of NUTR 504 and 514. Students will spend time, too, in the healthcare foodservice setting focusing on operations and personnel management skills as part of NUTR 530.

Students interested in continuing their graduate nutrition education at UT, through pursuit of a PhD, for example, should plan to complete the application for the degree program along with

scholarship and fellowship applications by the start of the spring semester. There are a number of assistantship and scholarship opportunities available to financially support continuing students. Please direct any inquiries to the GP director.

Summer semester

NUTR 513 Community Nutrition Practicum I (3) Case study, simulation and experiential practice in community nutrition; development of cultural awareness, knowledge, skills, and experience. *(DE) Prerequisite(s): NUTR 412.*

NUTR 516 Clinical Practice Experience (4) Progression to independent clinical nutrition practice application in a community healthcare clinic setting and development of a collection plan for clinical outcomes data. Introduction to clinical nutrition practice in acute care settings.

Fall Semester

NUTR 503 Community Nutrition Assessment (2) Examination of the socio-ecological model and nutrition-related protective and risk factors at each level of the model; community nutrition needs assessment, including defining nutrition-related services, gaps, and health disparities in priority populations. This course is offered online in an asynchronous format.

NUTR 514 Advanced Community Nutrition Practicum (1) Experiential practice in community nutrition at local public health and community nutrition agencies; development of cultural awareness, knowledge, skills, and experience; participate in policy development and advocacy activities; plan, implement, and evaluate a population-focused nutrition intervention, culminating in a presentation for faculty, preceptors, students, and community members.

Repeatability: May be repeated. Maximum 3 hours.

(DE) Corequisite(s): NUTR 503 or Permission of Instructor.

NUTR 525 Clinical Nutrition III (2) Diagnosis, pathophysiology, management, evidence-based guidelines for nutrition intervention, and case scenario discussion of musculoskeletal diseases/disorders, HIV, inborn errors of metabolism, critical care, nephrology. *(DE) Prerequisite(s): NUTR 416.*

NUTR 526 Clinical Nutrition III Practicum (3) Independent clinical nutrition practice application in a community healthcare clinic setting. Collection of clinical outcomes data based on previously developed plan. Clinical nutrition experience in complex acute care conditions. *(RE) Prerequisite(s): NUTR 516. (RE) Corequisite(s): NUTR 525.*

AGNR 480 How to Feed the World (3) Human population growth will require food production to double by 2050. Explore ways our global society might sustainably increase food production, in ways that protect our environmental resources while maintaining food security and food justices. Aspects include socio-political, business, technology, cultural, religious, and natural sciences in various learning formats ranging from group discussions to guest lectures. Students are expected to develop potential solutions towards solving the world's food and environmental crises. May be used as capstone option for International Agriculture and International Resources minor.

Spring Semester

NUTR 504 Community Nutrition Intervention and Evaluation (2) Conceptualization of organizational and community-level interventions; overview of policy, systems, and environmental interventions; development of a culturally appropriate implementation and evaluation plan for a population-focused nutrition intervention; development of grant writing skills. This course is offered online in an asynchronous format.

NUTR 514 Advanced Community Nutrition Practicum (1) Experiential practice in community nutrition at local public health and community nutrition agencies; development of cultural awareness, knowledge, skills, and experience; participate in policy development and advocacy activities; plan, implement, and evaluate a population-focused nutrition intervention, culminating in a presentation for faculty, preceptors, students, and community members.

Repeatability: May be repeated. Maximum 3 hours.

(DE) Corequisite(s): NUTR 503 or Permission of Instructor.

NUTR 520 Clinical Nutrition Outcomes Data Analysis and Interpretation: (3) Data analysis, development of data displays, preparation of an abstract and poster or presentation for presentation of findings in a professional setting. *(RE) Prerequisite(s): NUTR 516, NUTR 526.*

NUTR 527: Advanced Clinical Practice and Mentorship (3) Advancement of independent clinical nutrition practice in a community healthcare clinic setting to include mentorship of undergraduate students as they are introduced to clinical nutrition practice. *(RE) Prerequisite(s): NUTR 526.*

NUTR 530 Healthcare Foodservice Management (3) Experiential learning in the healthcare foodservice setting with a focus on operations and management roles. *(DE) Prerequisite(s): NUTR 330; Hospitality and Tourism Management (HTM) 445.*

Information for students completing the Didactic Program in Dietetics only

This section of the handbook is specifically for students who complete the Bachelor of Science program with a concentration in Nutrition-Dietetics (DPD), but who plan to pursue completion of their education for RDN credentialing elsewhere. The next step is to complete an ACEND-accredited supervised practice program. Most ACEND-accredited supervised practice programs are currently classified as dietetic internships (DIs), though there are other models including Graduate Coordinated Programs (CPs), Graduate Programs in Nutrition and Dietetics (GPs), and Individualized Supervised Practice Programs (ISPPs). Thus, there are a variety of opportunities to attain the RDN credential for students who do not enter the M.S. here at UT. Program listings are provided on the [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics](#) website.

The most successful applicants to supervised practice programs are those who have built not only a record of academic success, but also records of leadership, volunteerism, nutrition-related experiences, and professionalism into their undergraduate years. The redesign of our DPD to include a substantial amount of practicum coursework and a focus on evidence-based practice,

research, and leadership make our graduates competitive. It is also important to note the upcoming change in degree requirements – as of **January 1, 2024**, individuals must have a minimum of a graduate degree in any field in order to sit for the RDN credentialing exam.

Here is a brief listing of characteristics linked to success in supervised practice applications which students can begin building today:

- **GPA.** Higher is better and science and nutrition courses will be scrutinized. Most internships have a minimum 3.0 GPA to submit an application, but that does not guarantee admission.
- **Nutrition-related work and volunteer experience.** Within the Nutrition-Dietetics concentration, practicum courses contribute substantially to this category. Additionally, students may explore employment and volunteer opportunities, particularly during the summer months. This can include experience in a hospital or nursing home diet office, foodservice or culinary experience, volunteer work with RDNs locally or elsewhere, summer camp for children with diabetes, conducting nutrition education programs for local children in afterschool programs, doing an independent study project or volunteering time to work on a research project with a nutrition professor, participating in Undergraduate Nutrition Student Association (UNSA) activities, and many, many others. As students work to gain such experience, they should keep a log of activities, time spent, and supervisors' names for each activity as this information will be required for applications (Excel spreadsheets work well for this). A good goal is about 500 hours of experience in a wide variety of areas.
- **Leadership.** Become involved in campus and non-campus organizations such as UNSA, run for office, volunteer to be a committee chair or work on a committee and work hard. The ability to lead a group and work as an effective team member are highly valued attributes in professional life.
- **Professionalism.** Work hard academically and in the workplace, show respect to peers, professors, and supervisors, get involved, and be a leader. There are plenty of opportunities for those who wish to pursue them. Students will need three strong letters of reference, and the earlier they begin to cultivate relationships with individuals who can provide these letters, the better off they will be. Typically, references include two faculty members in the nutrition major and one RDN who has served in a supervisory capacity for nutrition-related work or volunteer experience.

Timeline:

- **Freshman and sophomore years:**
 - Keep records of all relevant volunteer, work, and leadership experience including supervisor names and contact information, roles and responsibilities, time involved. Excel spreadsheets work well for tracking experience.
 - Keep copies of projects including presentations, nutrition education materials, and other items to include in development of a professional electronic portfolio (NUTR 410).
- **Junior year:**
 - Spring: The program directors host cohort meetings on both applying for the M.S. concentration in Clinical Nutrition & Dietetics as well as on preparing for supervised practice.

- Continue to keep records of all relevant volunteer, work, and leadership experience including supervisor names and contact information, roles and responsibilities, time involved. Excel works very well for tracking the details.
- Keep copies of projects including presentations, nutrition education materials, and other items to include in the professional electronic portfolio (NUTR 410).
- **Summer before and fall of senior year:**
 - Continue to keep records of all relevant volunteer, work, and leadership experience including supervisor names and contact information, roles and responsibilities, time involved.
 - Review resources from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics on the [application process](#).
 - Keep copies of projects including presentations, nutrition education materials, and other items to include in the professional electronic portfolio (NUTR 410).
 - Identify supervised practice programs of interest by perusing the [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics listing](#). Consider coordinated programs with a master's degree as an alternative to a dietetic internship. Graduate level coordinated programs also provide the supervised practice experience which confers eligibility for the RDN credentialing exam. Graduate Programs in Nutrition and Dietetics (GPs, initially referred to as Future Education Model graduate programs) and Individual Supervised Practice Programs (ISPPs) also meet requirements for supervised practice.
 - Visit supervised practice programs and attend open houses. Check websites for open house dates and visit information or contact program directors to set a date and time for an on-site visit
 - Be on time and dress professionally
 - Bring a resume or portfolio
 - Ask intelligent questions
 - Send a thank you letter, note or email within one week following the visit ... be sure grammar and spelling are correct!
 - If applying to programs requiring GRE scores, schedule the exam in advance (summer is ideal) so scores are available by application time. Learn more about the Graduate Record Exam at www.gre.org. Kaplan holds practice GREs to help prepare students – find out more at www.kaptest.com.
- **Fall of senior year:**
 - Review the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics resources on the [application process](#) if you have not already done so.
 - Plan to visit programs this fall and take the GRE if this hasn't been done already and is required for programs of interest.
 - An early fall cohort meeting will be scheduled to discuss program selection and assure students have established accounts for the online application system known as DICAS, particularly if applying to dietetic internships.
 - September-November: Set individual appointments with the DPD director to discuss plans and help target appropriate programs.
 - September-November: Double check application procedures and deadlines for all programs of interest as well as DICAS participation.
 - What is **DICAS**????

- The **Dietetics Inclusive Centralized Application Service** is a platform where students upload materials for many dietetics programs all in one place. Most dietetic internships participate in DICAS, but graduate coordinated programs (CPs) and Graduate Programs in Nutrition and Dietetics (GP) typically do not.
 - To begin building an electronic application which will be submitted to participating internship programs, enter the [DICAS portal](#).
 - DPD course listings for the application can be found on the [Nutrition Department website](#) or by request to the DPD director if a course list for an alternate year is needed.
- December: Request letters of reference from faculty members and RDNs familiar with work experiences.
 - How to do this: Contact the person by phone or email to make an appointment. At the appointment, respectfully ask if they would be willing to provide recommendations for supervised practice programs. They may ask about experiences, career goals, and deadlines. Be prepared to discuss with them and to provide necessary materials.
 - What to provide for all recommendations:
 - An up-to-date resume including the url for online portfolio.
 - A list of the programs and their deadlines
 - What else to provide if applying to programs that participate in DICAS
 - Let recommenders know that they should expect an email request from DICAS once their information is entered into the electronic application.
 - Be sure recommenders have a few weeks of lead time – many may want to write during the holiday break and early January before classes begin.
- December: Once semester grades are posted, order transcripts to be sent directly to DICAS from all institutions attended. Note: For students who have taken coursework elsewhere, including dual enrollment, those transcripts can be ordered at any time once coursework there is complete and on the transcript. Smaller schools, including community colleges, can take longer to process requests and transcripts from these institutions should be ordered early.
- December-January: Refine the draft personal statement/application letter written in NUTR 410. Be sure to share it with trusted family members, peers, and the DPD director for constructive feedback.
 - Format: generally professional letter with date, address, and appropriate salutation. **FOLLOW DIRECTIONS!** It may vary for each program, so check carefully regarding any specific length and content requirements – general guidance is on DICAS.
 - What to include:
 - What stimulated interest in becoming a RDN
 - Career goals
 - Expand on qualifications and experience
 - What is it about the particular program that makes it a good fit?
 - Other information requested by the program

- The letter should be professional, well-written, clear, well-organized, and on-point. Do not include extraneous details.
 - Tip: Write the letter as a Word document, then copy and paste into the space on the DICAS application. Be sure it is formatted professionally with appropriate spacing so it is easily readable.
 - DO write individual letters to each program and BE SURE to link the correct letter to the correct program in the DICAS application.
- **Spring of senior year**
 - Mid-January: If applying to programs through DICAS, attend DICAS application troubleshooting session with the program director.
 - Get applications in by deadlines, which may vary.
 - Check for any supplemental materials required by programs that go beyond the DICAS application itself.
 - Consider scheduling a mock interview through UT [Career Services](#), if internships require an interview (in-person, Zoom, Skype, telephone, etc.).
 - February:
 - Submit DICAS application by February 15
 - If programs to which you're applying participate in matching, submit program choices in rank order to [D&D Digital](#) online by February 15 along with fee
 - DO release name in case of non-match
 - Applicants may *reorder* dietetic internship ranks (but cannot add any new choices) for a specific time period. Withdrawals from matching must be submitted by the deadline.

The program director is available for consultation. Please make an appointment by contacting Katie Price, PhD, RDN, LDN at kprice34@utk.edu.

Policies and Procedures
Graduate Program in Nutrition and Dietetics and Didactic Program in Dietetics
Department of Nutrition, The University of Tennessee

The Graduate Program in Nutrition and Dietetics and Didactic Program in Dietetics, both housed in the Department of Nutrition, comply with policies and procedures delineated by the University of Tennessee, including those in [Hilltopics](#), the website which constitutes the official student handbook of The University of Tennessee. Some policies and procedures are also available via [One Stop Student Services](#) and the current university [undergraduate and graduate catalogs](#). The policies and procedures described herein are those required by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND), the accrediting body of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

1. Insurance requirements, including those for professional liability: Student liability insurance is required for the program during years 3 and 4 of undergraduate study and for the graduate year, during which time students will be involved in practicum coursework both on and off campus. The current cost is \$10 for the academic year spanning June 1-May 31, which will be added to student tuition and fee statements through the bursar's office. In addition to student liability insurance, students must also participate in some form of health insurance. Students not covered by a parental policy or other private policy outside of the University must purchase student health insurance. More information about student health insurance can be found [here](#). All students must provide evidence of health coverage during years 3 and 4 as well as the graduate year in order to participate in required practicum courses. This evidence may be a wallet card, a copy of the policy, a receipt from the University indicating fee paid for student health insurance, or any record showing clearly that the student is covered by a health insurance policy.

2. Liability for safety in travel to or from assigned areas: Students are responsible for providing their own transportation to assigned practice sites. The University of Tennessee is not liable for any injuries sustained in travel to and from assigned areas. See general campus safety and security information [here](#). Student Liability Insurance does not cover travel.

3. Injury or illness while in a facility for supervised experiential learning: The University of Tennessee is not liable for any injuries sustained during supervised experiential learning. Student Liability Insurance, as described in (1) above is required for students enrolled in practicum courses during years 3 and 4 as well as the graduate year. In case of minor accident or illness, the faculty member and/or preceptor and Program Director must be notified. Except for emergency situations, the facility will not provide health services for students. Any medical care provided will be at the expense of the individual involved.

4. Evidence of health status: Prior to beginning practicum experiences that involve interaction with members of the public, students must be free of any communicable diseases. Because our program relies on students gaining required supervised experiential learning hours onsite in clinical, foodservice, and community settings, students in the program must meet health and vaccination requirements of the sites prior to placement. Requirements for off-campus experiences may differ from University of Tennessee requirements and are beyond the University of Tennessee's control. If sites offer the opportunity for students to apply for

exemption from any requirements, i.e. COVID-19 vaccination, applying for an exemption through each site is fully the student's responsibility and takes place after acceptance into the program. Because the experience in Cherokee Health Systems clinics provides the foundational clinical experience for the program across four semesters, it is not possible to proceed with the program without meeting the health and vaccination requirements of Cherokee Health Systems unless CHS approves an exemption. Additionally, policies at other sites may further limit options available to students, which means that students may face a more limited clinical elective, community, and healthcare food service experience as the University of Tennessee has no control over whether exemptions are accepted at any site. If exemptions are approved at any sites, students are required to follow the exemption policies of each respective site, or the exemption is void. Additionally, state or federal laws or the policies of external sites can change at any time, and this is also beyond control of the University of Tennessee. Any of these factors can affect the time required and the ability to complete the program. Prior to placements, students must provide the program director with documentation that they have had the following vaccinations, medical tests, or documentation of exemptions in order to comply with requirements set by external sites:

- Current influenza vaccination (annually before October 1)
- Tuberculin skin test or chest x-ray within the last year
- Tetanus booster within the last ten years
- Rubella vaccination
- Varicella (chicken pox) vaccination or date of event
- Blood work to include complete blood count (CBC)
- Current medical history including blood pressure
- Three-part Hepatitis B vaccination (done over 6 months)
- Current American Heart Association BLS Provider certification is required for the graduate year. When possible, a training opportunity will be provided by the program.
- COVID-19 vaccination is not required by all sites as of August 2023, but some sites continue to retain the requirement at this time.

Students may have many of these medical tests performed at the University's Student Health Center at no charge. Students who wish to have their private physicians conduct the physical examination are allowed to do so. The same medical form (obtained from a Program Director) is completed by the Student Health Service physicians and private physicians. Physical examinations must be completed prior to beginning practicum experiences that involve interaction with members of the public. Students who do not provide evidence of completion of the physical examination are not allowed to begin clinical experiences until the results of the physical are submitted to the Director. The written affiliation agreements with the clinical facilities specify that the Program will send only students who meet the physical requirements of the facility. Individual student health data are not provided to the facility. Dates of negative TB tests and copies of vaccination records may be provided to facilities that require this information. The clinical facility may request withdrawal of a student whose health status is detrimental to the patients and/or staff. Requests for withdrawal of a student are made to the Program Director.

5. Drug testing and criminal background checks. During experiential learning that takes place beginning year 3 and continuing throughout the remainder of the program, students will interact with people from the community. To protect the community, the Department requires all

students engaged in experiential learning that involves direct contact with the public to complete a Tennessee Bureau of Investigation background check, a drug and alcohol screening test, Tennessee State Child Abuse Registry clearance, and National Sex Offenders Search clearance. Additionally, some facilities require administration of their own drug screening and background check procedures as part of onboarding. Students enrolled in courses that involve experiential learning will also be required to sign a document signifying awareness of Tennessee law regarding child sexual abuse. Associated costs of the background check and screening test are the sole responsibility of each student. These requirements must be completed in spring of year 3 before engaging with community members outside the classroom environment and be maintained throughout the duration of the program.

In the event a student is found to have a criminal incident on their background check or a positive drug/alcohol screening, they will be unable to complete any courses that include experiential learning for at least one year, which means they will be unable to complete either degree program until their record is cleared, if clearing the record is indeed possible. Information on results of background checks and drug and alcohol screening will be released to the program director, who will notify other course faculty as necessary. A committee made up of the GP director, DPD director, and either the Director of Graduate Studies (if the student has been accepted for graduate study) or a third member of the program's clinical faculty will be convened to determine appropriate measures going forward. In the event of a positive drug and/or alcohol screening, these measures will include referral to the Alcohol Education Program or Drug Education Program, as appropriate, through UT's Center for Health Education & Wellness. If infractions violate UT's system-wide [policy on a Drug Free Campus and Workplace](#) (2017) or have potential to endanger faculty, staff, or students, the student who has violated the policy is subject to dismissal from the program.

6. *Employee replacement*: Students engaged in supervised experiential learning as part of the program curriculum must not be used to replace employees.

7. *Compensation*: Students are not paid compensation as part of the program curriculum.

8. *Program complaints*: Students with program complaints should first contact the appropriate Program Director in attempts to resolve the issue underlying the complaint. If the issue is not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, the Department Head is the next point of contact. If the student wishes to proceed further with the complaint, he or she may contact the Dean of the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences with the complaint. If these channels and other appropriate channels at the campus level have been pursued in good faith and resolution has not yet been reached, the student may direct their complaint to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Success, as per the process outlined in Hilltopics. Students who have matriculated into the graduate program must follow the [Appeal Procedure approved by the Graduate Council](#). Records of program complaints, should they occur, are maintained for a period of no less than seven years, including resolution of complaints.

9. *Submission of program complaints to the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics*: Once all other alternatives for resolution of program complaints have been

exhausted related specifically to program noncompliance with accreditation standards, complaints can be filed directly with ACEND in accordance with processes outlined [here](#).

10. *Assessment of prior learning and credit toward program requirements:* Students who wish to request assessment of prior learning for exemption from courses defined in the major curriculum are required to contact the DPD or GP Director, as appropriate, to begin the evaluation process. This assessment is an option only for undergraduate courses. Documentation may include academic transcripts, course descriptions, course syllabi, certificates, position descriptions, projects, and other such materials to sufficiently establish that DPD and/or GP requirements met by a specific course or courses have been fully met. If it is determined that such requirements have been met, a course petition will be completed as needed in accordance with university policy. Copies of documentation will be retained to substantiate eligibility for issuance of DPD and/or GP Verification Statement at program completion.

11. *Formal assessment of student learning and regular reports of performance and progress:* For the DPD, student assignments and grading are determined by individual instructors in each course. At a minimum, students will be assigned a grade at completion of each course consistent with University grading procedures. See University academic policies and procedures regarding grades in the [current catalog](#). Progress through the curriculum is monitored through the university's Banner registration system and individual academic advising, with Student Services advisors providing guidance during years 1 and 2 and a clinical faculty member assigned as academic advisor for each dietetics student thereafter. The DPD Director and college-level Student Services advisors are available for additional guidance as needed.

For the GP, students are evaluated on key performance indicators throughout the curriculum in order to monitor progress toward competency achievement. Within courses, instructors monitor progress and provide constructive feedback to facilitate knowledge and skill acquisition. This is accomplished in conjunction with preceptors, when applicable. At the conclusion of each semester, clinical faculty will meet as a group to review student progress toward overall competency achievement and identify particular needs for the upcoming semester in order to assure each student is on track to achieve all competencies in a timely manner. Additionally, any concerns regarding professional and ethical behavior and academic integrity will be discussed. Students will meet with their faculty advisor by the start of the subsequent semester to review their competency achievement report and any concerns and coordinate with the Program Director to assure timely progress through the remainder of the program.

12. *Program retention and remediation procedures:* Students at the undergraduate level must meet academic milestones established in UTrack and successfully complete prerequisite coursework in a timely manner in order to continue successfully in the program. Academic advisors and instructors do what is within their means to provide student support. Additionally, the University's [Student Success Center](#) is the ideal resource for student support, including academic coaching, supplemental instruction, and tutoring. Undergraduate students who are not admitted to the M.S. concentration in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics will be counseled regarding alternative means of attaining the RDN credential and/or alternative career paths as appropriate.

For students who have matriculated into graduate study, the University policy requires maintenance of a minimum 3.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA) for all courses taken with an A-F letter grade. If the GPA falls below 3.0, the student will be placed on academic probation. Graduate study may continue as long as each subsequent semester's GPA is 3.0 or higher. Once the cumulative GPA is 3.0 or higher, probationary status is removed. Procedures for academic dismissal are followed as defined in the current [Graduate Catalog](#). Students wishing to appeal must follow the [Appeal Procedure approved by the Graduate Council](#).

13. *Disciplinary/termination procedures:* [See Student Code of Conduct information in Hilltopics](#).

14. *Graduation and/or program completion requirements:*

In order to successfully complete the Didactic Program in Dietetics, students will:

- Complete requirements for the B.S. in Nutrition, concentration in Nutrition-Dietetics, or DPD if already in possession of a bachelor's degree.

In order to successfully complete the Graduate Program in Nutrition and Dietetics, students will:

- Complete requirements for the B.S. in Nutrition, concentration in Nutrition-Dietetics, in accordance with the Fall 2019 catalog or later or DPD in accordance with the Fall 2019 catalog or later if already in possession of a bachelor's degree. Note: NUTR 413S is optional for students completing the Graduate Program in Nutrition and Dietetics.
- Complete course and performance requirements for the M.S. in Nutrition, concentration in Clinical Nutrition & Dietetics, including capstone embedded within NUTR 520.
- Meet all ACEND competencies, which are embedded in required undergraduate and graduate coursework.
- Complete a minimum 1,000 hours of supervised experiential learning as a component of combined undergraduate and graduate coursework. Hours will be tracked by each student and verified by individual instructors and preceptors, as applicable, each semester. At the conclusion of each semester, total hours from each course will be documented by instructors on a shared spreadsheet for each student. Final verification of hours will be completed by the GP program director.

Completion timeline requirements for the DPD are in accordance with University of Tennessee policy. Students may graduate under the requirements of any catalog in effect during their time of study at UT provided that catalog is in effect within six years of their graduation date. See the undergraduate catalog for details. Maximum time for completion of the M.S. is in accordance with the University of Tennessee policy for time to master's degree completion. At the time of publication this limit is six years from the beginning of the first graduate course, typically this would begin with the summer term in which students are enrolled in NUTR 513 and 516. See the [current graduate catalog](#) for details.

15. *Verification statement requirements and procedures:* Requirements of the Didactic Program in Dietetics at the University of Tennessee are equivalent to requirements to earn a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Nutrition with the Dietetics concentration. Thus, students who graduate with a B.S. from the University and a Nutrition-Dietetics concentration major will receive a DPD Verification Statement. Eligibility is established through a published listing of

students having graduated with a B.S. in nutrition at the completion of each term and confirmation of Dietetics concentration completion. Academic records of each listed student are reviewed and a verification statement generated with digital signature for emailing to students through their university email address OR for mailing to an address provided by the student or permanent address if the student did not provide a mailing address or for pick up by the student. Additional copies (digital and/or hard copies) are kept on file by the program director, as required.

Students already in possession of a bachelor's degree or higher and pursuing DPD requirements will likewise receive verification statements if they satisfactorily complete DPD coursework or a combination of DPD coursework plus equivalent courses. The DPD director maintains evaluations of course completion for each student electronically and requires a final academic history and/or transcripts showing that all requirements have been met prior to issuance of DPD verification statements with digital signature for emailing to students through their university email address OR for mailing to an address provided by the student or permanent address if the student did not provide a mailing address or for pick up by the student. Additional copies (digital and/or hard copies) are kept on file by the program director, as required.

Requirements of the Graduate Program in Nutrition and Dietetics at the University of Tennessee are equivalent to the combined prerequisites for and completion of the M.S. in Nutrition with a concentration in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics. Officially, the GP accreditation encompasses the 4th year of undergraduate study and the M.S. Thus, students who graduate with a M.S. from the University with this concentration will receive a GP verification statement. Eligibility is established through a published listing of students having graduated with a M.S. in nutrition and completion of prerequisites for and concentration requirements in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics is verified. Once master's degrees appear on the transcript, official transcripts must be submitted to the GP director. Verification statements are then generated with digital signature for emailing to students through their university email address OR for mailing to an address provided by the student or permanent address if the student did not provide a mailing address or for pick up by the student. Additional copies are kept on file by the program director, as required.

16. *Verifying identity of students participating in distance instruction and/or online testing:* University technology use [policy](#) as it relates to distance learning, including online testing within an otherwise face-to-face course, requires secure logins and passwords with two-factor authentication to access exams housed within the learning management system. Additionally, students are prohibited by policy from sharing their ID and password. Technology security policy can be found [here](#).

17. *Withdrawal and refund of tuition and fees:* See more information [here](#).

18. *Scheduling and program calendar:* See Current and future year Academic Calendars [here](#). Instructors of individual courses, including program directors, within the department comply with the University calendar in scheduling course activities. A copy of the departmental undergraduate curriculum in Nutrition-Dietetics and graduate curriculum in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics detailing the recommended program schedule is available in the current [Undergraduate Catalog or Graduate Catalog](#), respectively. Vacations and holidays should be

planned according to the University calendar for fall and spring semesters as well as the summer of the graduate year. Accommodations for leaves of absence will be considered by the program directors on a case-by-case basis.

19. *Protection of privacy information, including information used for identifying students in distance learning, and student access to their own student files:* See the [University's FERPA website](#) for complete policy. Students are able to access their personal student information and academic records on MyUTK as well as academic advising information and records on Navigate (also accessed through MyUTK). Faculty are required to protect privacy of student information, including that of students taking an online or hybrid course or taking online exams or quizzes in an otherwise fully face-to-face course. For synchronous online class sessions, students are not required to appear on screen. Class sessions may be videorecorded. Recordings can only be shared with individuals outside the class if student video, names, netIDs are not shown, microphones are muted, and the chat function is disabled.

20. *Access to student support services, including health services, counseling, tutoring, testing, and financial aid resources:* See [Hilltopics](#), section entitled Student Support for detailed information regarding access to services for all students.