



**PROGRAM POLICY STATEMENT
DIETETIC INTERNSHIP (DI) PROGRAM
DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND NUTRITION**

2023-2024

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Overview

The Department of Behavioral Health and Nutrition (BHAN) offers a dietetic internship (DI) certificate program at the University of Delaware (UD).

1.2 Mission

The mission of the DI program is to develop outstanding, future-oriented, entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists for the profession and society. The program emphasizes that this is the beginning of a career involving continuing education, a variety of experiences and professional growth. This program expects to educate the future leaders of our profession.

1.3 Context

The Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) stipulates that students must first earn a baccalaureate degree in dietetics and/or nutrition from a program accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND), and then complete an ACEND-accredited Dietetic Internship (DI). UD's DI has been granted full accreditation by ACEND.

Table 1: Requirements the DI program

Course	Credits
NTDT550 Dietetics Practicum I ^c	4
NTDT551 Dietetics Practicum II ^c	4
NTDT650 Current Perspectives in Dietetics I	2
NTDT651 Current Perspectives in Dietetics II	2
TOTAL GRADUATE CREDITS^b:	12

Expectations: The DI program will prepare graduates to successfully pass the Registration Examination for Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDN). RDNs are recognized by hospitals, medical centers, health care providers and companies, as nutrition experts. RDNs are employed in many settings including academia, non-governmental organizations (business and non-profit), allied health fields, public service at all levels of national government, and international organizations such as the World Health Organization. The curriculum will provide graduate students with the training needed to become proficient clinicians and healthcare leaders.

Certificate offered

Program graduates will receive a verification statement and certificate of completion for the Dietetic Internship.

1.4 Admission Requirements

Applicants must submit all materials directly to the University of Delaware Office of Graduate and Professional Education using the online admission process before admission can be considered. Admission applications are available at: <https://grad-admissions.udel.edu/apply/>.

In addition, applicants must submit all required application materials to DICAS at <https://portal.dicas.org/>.

Admission decisions will be made by the Intern Selection Committee. Students will be admitted to the program based on enrollment availability and their ability to meet the following minimum entrance requirements:

1. A Master's degree **and** a Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) Verification Statement from an ACEND accredited college or university with a GPA ≥ 2.75
2. Recent relevant work experience beyond that required for undergraduate course requirements
3. A Medical Nutrition Therapy course completed no more than four years prior to application
4. A Biochemistry course completed no more than five years prior to application

Admission to the DI program is limited, and not all qualified applicants will be admitted.

1.5 Prior Degree Requirement

A completed master's degree and a Verification Statement from an ACEND accredited didactic program in dietetics (DPD) or a DPD Intent to Complete form (if currently completing a Bachelor's degree), is required for admittance into the DI program.

1.6 Application Deadlines

Applications (all materials) for the DI program must be submitted by February 15th for admission to the program the following summer semester. The program will offer summer admission only. Applicants are strongly advised to complete and submit applications as early as possible.

1.7 Criteria for Admission and Documents Required

Each application will be evaluated individually based on:

1. Academic record/achievement
2. Work, research, and/or community experience
3. Personal statement
4. Recommendations

Applicants are expected to submit:

1. An official transcript from an accredited college or university
2. A DPD verification statement from an ACEND accredited program or a DPD Intent to Complete form
3. A written personal statement
4. Current resume
5. Three letters of recommendation; two academic references and one work or volunteer

reference are recommended, however, extensive work experience may warrant submission of two work references and one academic reference.

1.8 Admission Categories

Applicants must meet all admissions criteria to be considered for acceptance. The DI program does not provide “conditional” acceptance. The DI is a full-time 7-month long program. Graduate Assistantships are not available for this program.

1.9 BHAN Statement of Diversity and Inclusion

BHAN Statement of Diversity and Inclusion

The Department of Behavioral Health and Nutrition (BHAN) is committed to sharing values of diversity and inclusion. We believe that we can best promote and endorse these values by recruiting and retaining a diverse group of students, faculty and staff and by creating a climate of respect that is supportive of their academic success. This climate for diversity and inclusion is central to achieving our academic potential through research and scholarship, teaching, and service.

The Department of Behavioral Health and Nutrition gives definition to this climate of a diverse and inclusive community by encouraging and valuing:

1. **Equitable Access to our Departments Programs and Practices:** We implement academic programs and scholarly practices that seek to provide equitable access and enable all students to grow academically. Specific strategies that we keenly use include:
 - Active participation in the annual, 6-day College of Health Sciences Summer Camp that provides a deep exploration into health sciences majors and careers for traditionally underrepresented students (i.e., minority, low-income, or (soon to be) first generation students).
 - The provision of a dynamic and up-to-date BHAN website that utilizes culturally diverse images and engages current and potential students, as well as their families, in learning about our on-going programs.
 - We are engaged with the Ronald E. McNair Post Baccalaureate Achievement Program (the McNair’s Scholars Program). The McNair Scholars program is renowned for preparing traditionally underrepresented groups for graduate education.
 - We seek to recruit students from Historically Black Colleges (HBCUs) and other Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) and organizations. Specifically, we engage with central organizations such as The Delaware Valley Consortium for Excellence & Equity (formerly the Delaware Valley Minority Student Achievement Consortium or DVMSAC), and The New Jersey Network to Close the Achievement Gaps to directly market our academic programs to traditionally underserved groups.

2. **Inclusive Teaching and Learning:** We are rigorous and empathetic teachers who collectively seek to examine and revise our curriculum and teaching practices as necessary to ensure that we are effective in helping all students achieve their academic potential. Specific strategies that we use to promote inclusive teaching and learning include:

- Faculty are trained and actively encouraged to connect students (both direct advisees and any student who solicits help) with professional groups and organizations that promote diversity and assist in establishing networks as per the university resource listing: <http://grad.udel.edu/students/diversity-inclusion/national-diversity-resources>
- All students in the program will be provided with a tailored advising and mentoring plan that will be designed to maximize academic success. The University of Delaware’s Diversity and Inclusion resources will be consulted in the development of this plan (please see <https://www1.udel.edu/gradoffice/diversity/external.html> for a listing of these resources).

1.10 University Statement

Admission to the graduate certificate program is competitive. Those who meet stated requirements are not guaranteed admission, nor are those who fail to meet all requirements necessarily precluded from admission if they offer other appropriate strengths as determined by the Intern Selection Committee.

2.0 GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

2.1 Planned Program of Study

A typical plan for the program of study is shown below.

	Fall	Spring
Dietetic Internship	NTDT550* (4) NTDT650 (2)	NTDT551* (4) NTDT651 (2)
*Students complete a minimum of 1000 supervised practice hours as part of NTDT550 and 551.		

2.2 Timetable and Definition of Satisfactory Progress Towards Completion

Students in the DI program must complete the course requirements in the progression outlined in **Table 2**. Students start in the program in the fall and are expected to complete the program in the following spring.

An extension of time limit may be granted for circumstances beyond the student's control. Requests for time extensions must be made in writing and approved by the DI Program Director. The maximum time allowed to complete the program is normally 12 months.

2.3 Reasons for Dismissal from the Program

The DI Program Director notifies students when they are dismissed from the DI program.

Dismissals may take place for the following reasons:

- If progress in supervised practice rotations is deemed unsatisfactory:
- In the event a preceptor deems the student's progress in a rotation unsatisfactory, he/she will contact the Dietetic Internship (DI) Director. The intern may be asked to leave the supervised practice facility for the remainder of the day and develop a written plan for improvement. The plan will be discussed between the DI Director, intern and preceptor and a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) will be finalized.
- Failure of the intern to adhere to the agreed-upon PIP may result in termination from the dietetic internship or removal from the supervised practice facility. If the intern is removed from the supervised practice facility, he/she will be responsible for securing another supervised practice site to complete the remaining rotation requirements.
- At the final evaluation in each rotation, it will be determined if the intern has met entry-level performance. If the intern receives unsatisfactory ratings, the intern will be given specific suggestions in writing about what needs to be accomplished to achieve a satisfactory rating, and will be scheduled for additional time in that rotation to attempt to achieve a satisfactory rating. The amount of extra time in that rotation may not exceed the total amount of time originally scheduled in the rotation. Interns who have received an unsatisfactory final evaluation in the final rotation of the internship will be allowed to schedule additional days as needed in that rotation.
- At any time during the program, an intern may be notified of failure to make satisfactory progress toward the completion of the internship in the judgment of the DI Director.
- In the event an intern is unable to achieve a satisfactory final evaluation in a rotation even after spending additional time in that rotation, the intern will be referred to the DI Director for consideration of being allowed to continue in the program. The DI Director may terminate interns who show a failure to perform satisfactorily after receiving sufficient evidence of unsatisfactory performance from the supervising preceptors. The DI Director has the right to terminate an intern who receives a minimum of two unsatisfactory evaluations in any of the rotations.

In addition, an intern may be terminated from the DI program for any of the following reasons:

- Any act or behavior which is a violation of local, state or federal law on the property of the University of Delaware or a supervised practice facility.
- Any act or behavior which threatens the physical, emotional, mental or environmental

safety of faculty, staff, interns, employees of the University or supervised practice facilities.

- Any act in violation of the affiliation agreement between the University and the supervised practice facility.

3.0 FINANCIAL AID

This is a graduate certificate program and students in the program cannot be supported with graduate assistantships due to the required clinical training hours.

3.1 DI Program Director

The Dietetic Internship (DI) Director will oversee the DI Program. The DI Director will serve on the Nutrition Graduate Programs Committee, alongside the MSHN program leader and the Director of Nutrition Graduate Programs.

Responsibilities of the DI Director include:

- 1) Providing leadership and oversight for the program
- 2) Representing the program at faculty and Nutrition Graduate Programs Committee meetings
- 3) Communicating as necessary with the University Graduate College
- 4) Serving as the first point of contact for issues arising with program students and faculty
- 5) Corresponding with prospective students and overseeing program recruitment and admission decisions
- 6) Program evaluation and assessment
- 7) Ensuring program's compliance with Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND)
- 8) Overseeing all aspects of the Dietetic Internship

3.2 Nutrition Graduate Programs Committee

The Nutrition Graduate Programs Committee will be responsible for the administrative duties across all graduate nutrition programs, including the DI. In addition to the Nutrition Graduate Programs Director, the Committee will consist of the MS in Human Nutrition Graduate Program Leader, the MS/Dietetic Internship Director, and two affiliated faculty members, and shall be chaired by the Nutrition Graduate Programs Director. The two affiliated faculty members shall be decided upon by the Nutrition program faculty for staggered, two-year terms.

Responsibilities of the Nutrition Graduate Program Committee shall include:

- 1) Review of applications and admission of students into the program,
- 2) Approval of student selection of a new faculty advisor after admission to the program,
- 3) Selection of a panel for Comprehensive Exam Committee,

- 4) Review of students with academic issues, including dismissal of students who fail to make satisfactory progress, and
- 5) Other tasks required for the continued success of the program.