

Abilene Christian University - Dallas

# M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship Program Handbook

Last Updated: January 15, 2025



## Welcome to ACU Online!

ACU's mission is to educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world. This mission is achieved through:

- Exemplary teaching, offered by an innovative and caring community of Christian scholars, that inspires a commitment to life-long learning;
- Significant research, grounded in the university's disciplinary strengths, that informs and impacts issues of global importance to the academy, church, and society;
- Meaningful service as a divine calling that enriches our global society, academic disciplines, the university, and the church to God's glory.

## Welcome!

Welcome to the M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship Program at Abilene Christian University. You are part of a group of people selected through careful consideration, and we are glad you have chosen to complete your education with us. During the program, you will be challenged in a variety of ways -- academically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually.

Abilene Christian University's combined M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship program is one of the first programs in the nation to offer an internship program with an emphasis on "Poverty and Community." It equips students/interns with the knowledge and practical skills needed to become a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist. Throughout the 98-week (approximately 22.5 months) program and especially during the internship rotations, students/interns will focus on poverty and community as part of its area of study. The ACU program prepares entry-level Registered Dietitian Nutritionists for careers in health care settings, schools, government and non-profit entities, especially those serving the economically disadvantaged and individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Your academic and personal experiences will be significant. Academically, your journey will be guided by official policy as determined by the University.

The M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship Handbook (Handbook) is designed to be an aide to you during the program. It will provide much of the information necessary to complete your journey successfully. It does not, however, supersede any official university policies or the student handbook produced by the University.

It is your responsibility to be familiar with the ACU Student Catalog and Program Handbook. This Handbook may be updated as you progress through the program, and you will be notified in writing if impactful changes are made. You are responsible for being familiar with the most current version of this Handbook. When situations arise that are not addressed in the Handbook, please consult with the Program Director. This Handbook serves as a contract between the M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship program and you, the student. Please read the Handbook carefully and keep it accessible for quick reference.

We hope your professional and personal journey during your studies is rewarding and challenging! This Handbook is a living document which is regularly updated as needed. If the information on a particular issue seems outdated, contact the Interim Program Director, Sheila Jones, [jones@acu.edu](mailto:jones@acu.edu).

**Program Handbook Acknowledgement**

Students sign a statement during the first week they are in the program that they have read the Master of Science in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship Handbook and agree to abide by all of the policies and procedures. The M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship Director will keep this on file.

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# Accreditation

**The ACU Dietetic Internship is fully accredited with the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND).** ACEND's contact information is listed below:

Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics  
120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190  
Chicago, IL 60606-6995  
(312) 899-0040, ext. 5400  
[www.acend@eatright.org](mailto:www.acend@eatright.org).

Accreditation includes self-analysis, preparation of a self-study report, and an on-site evaluation visit by a team of professional peers. Dietetics educators and practitioners, appointed by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) board, participate in the peer review process to determine if a program is achieving its own educational objectives and meeting the accreditation standards. The ACEND board accredits programs that are able to meet these standards.

Completion of the M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship allows graduates to sit for the Registration Examination for Dietitians. Application for state certification/licensure (if applicable) may be made after credentialing.

Abilene Christian University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award associate, baccalaureate, master's and doctoral degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Ga. 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of ACU.

# **Program Mission,** **Goals, and Objectives**

The mission of the Abilene Christian University M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship is to equip interns who model Christian values to become Registered Dietitians/Nutritionists to lead and empower individuals, especially those with economic need, to achieve better nutrition and healthier lifestyles.

## **M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship Program Goals and Objectives**

### **Goals and Objectives**

**1) Program graduates will have commitment to utilize nutrition-related knowledge to improve the quality of the health and well-being among those who have limited resources.**

This goal is congruent with the M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship mission concerning helping those in poverty.

Objective 1.1 of Goal 1 – Of surveys returned from graduates, at least 80 percent are offering services to those in need in their church or community.

**2) Program graduates will obtain employment in dietetics or related field.**

This goal fits with the mission in the preparation of graduates for successful employment in the field.

Objective 2.1 of Goal 2 - At least 80% of interns complete program requirements within 147 weeks (150% of planned program length).

Objective 2.2 of Goal 2 - At least 80 percent of program graduates take the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists within 12 months of program completion.

Objective 2.3 of Goal 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 2.4 of Goal 2 - Of graduates who seek employment, at least 80 percent are employed in nutrition and dietetics or related fields within 12 months of graduation.

Objective 2.5 of Goal 2 - Of surveys returned from employers, at least 80 percent will indicate graduates are prepared for entry-level practice in the workplace.

### **3) Program graduates will be in leadership in the field of nutrition and dietetics.**

Being prepared for leadership in the field indicates that graduates are well-prepared for the profession, which reflects the mission of providing high quality supervised practice experiences that prepare graduates for the field. The expectation is that graduates will be highly respected because of their competency and leadership potential.

Objective 3.1 of Goal 3 - Of surveys returned from employers, at least 80 percent rate graduates as being good or excellent for leadership potential.

Objective 3.2 of Goal 3 - Of surveys returned from graduates, at least 80 percent are in leadership in the field of nutrition and dietetics within 2 years after completing the program.

The mission, goals, and objectives will be monitored at least annually for program effectiveness. Program outcomes data are available on request.

## **The Mission of Student Success**

ACU Online Student Success seeks to lead the industry in providing holistic, innovative, and effective student support, for diverse and non-traditional students, which is guided by our Christian values. We will provide a superior advising and engagement experience through effective relationship building informed by best practices and institutional data. To serve ACU's intentionally diverse population, we will collaborate to educate students through accountability, compassion, empathy, and honesty.

# Admission Requirements

All applicants must first apply on the Dietetic Internship Centralized Application Services (DICAS) online applicant portal. DICAS is a service of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and offers applicants a convenient, state-of-the-art, web-based application service. The DICAS application may be accessed at <https://portal.dicas.org>.

## **The admission requirements for DICAS are:**

- Complete the online application and pay application fee;
- Submit three letters of recommendation;
- Submit any/all official transcript(s) in English (or translated to English) of all previous college work. The transcript must indicate a bachelor's degree in Nutrition or related field from a regionally accredited college or university;
- Submit a personal statement which includes the following: Short-term and long-term professional goals (after completing the dietetic internship); address how faith can inform your work in the profession of dietetics, describe experiences you have had working with individuals who are dealing with poverty or are at risk for homelessness and how you felt about those experiences, explain your philosophy of working with the impoverished, state reason(s) you chose to apply to the ACU M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship
- Submit a personal resume;
- ACU DI will conduct interviews with candidates and program director after applications are reviewed.
- DI will follow ACEND standards and requirements in regards to notification of acceptance into the program.

## **The admission requirements for the ACU M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship program:**

- A cumulative undergraduate approximate 3.2, and a minimum grade of B in Didactic Program in Dietetics courses and supporting courses including the sciences, statistics, and management is preferred; and
- Applicants must have completed a Didactic Program in Dietetics requirements in an accredited program as specified by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND). Potential students/interns must submit an Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Verification statement or Declaration of Intent to Complete a Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) along with their completed application.



# **What to Expect in the** **M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic** **Internship Program**

Thirty hours of online courses (10 courses) for the M.S in Nutrition degree are taken in the first year (60 weeks) of the program with 38 weeks of coursework. The orientation to the internship, supervised practice rotations, and other graduate courses (9 hours, 6 courses) will follow the first year. Courses in the second year are taken concurrently with the rotations but begin in August. The orientation for the internship begins in August, but the subsequent rotation cycle will begin in September and end in May of the next year. The dietetic internship portion will provide 1280 hours of supervised practice rotations along with experiences in the orientation week. The internship orientation and rotation portion of the program is 38 weeks in length with 32 weeks of supervised practice rotations. The total number of weeks in the combined program total 98 weeks or approximately 22.5 months.

Required courses in the program include Weight Management I, Nutrition and Poverty, Nutrition Assessment, Nutrition Education and Counseling, Nutrition and Integrative Medicine, Nutrition Research I and II, Nutritional Genomics, Practice Skills and Current Issues, and Dietetic Internship I, II, III, and IV. Electives include Nutrition and Diabetes, Pediatric Nutrition, Nutrition for Exercise and Sport, Nutrition for Eating Disorders, and Weight Management II.

The rotations should prepare interns with entry-level competence for work in any area of dietetics. Rotations include settings such as acute-care in hospitals, long-term care hospitals, other long-term care facilities, renal dialysis centers, foodservice in schools, WIC, food banks, and other community sites. In addition, 8 first-year students will have the opportunity to take a medical mission trip to Uganda to work with Hope Speaks, a humanitarian speech pathology organization. This mission trip is mostly paid for by donors with ACU. In the second year, interns will undergo culinary training to obtain a culinary certificate.

The ACU M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship is designed to prepare students/interns with the academic and clinical training to sit for the Registration Examination for Dietitians. The M.S. in Nutrition/DI Committee members expect graduates of the ACU DI to be prepared to serve the majority of the population but especially populations that have disabilities or are in poverty.

# Degree Requirements

## **Courses and Rotations**

Requirements for the coursework for M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship are outlined ACU catalog,

[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=18&poid=8954&returnto=1026](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=18&poid=8954&returnto=1026).

During the first year of the M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship and beginning the last of June or first part of July, courses are taken continuously and are 7-week online courses (but the courses span 8 weeks because they begin on a Tuesday and end on a Monday) except during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. Thirty hours of courses are taken during the first year. As in the Online Student Handbook, <https://acu.edu/current-students/online-student-handbook/>, technology for online courses include regular access to the Internet, a laptop or desktop computer, a webcam, Microsoft Office 365 (free to ACU students), and Adobe Creative Cloud (free to ACU students).

The second year begins the last of June or first part of July with another 7-week online course. The internship portion begins in August of the second year with orientation followed by internship rotations in September through the next May. Internship rotations vary in length. All are supervised by Registered Dietitian Nutritionists or by professionals with appropriate credentials in their field. During rotations, 9 hours of required courses are taken over the fall and spring semesters so that a total of 39 hours of M.S. in Nutrition courses are completed by the end of the internship rotations.

An academic calendar and schedule bulletin for the M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship program is available to students online and in the office of the Director of the M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship. It is also available in the office of the Chair in the Department of Kinesiology and Nutrition. Graduate courses available and required by students/interns are listed under the Kinesiology and Nutrition section of the ACU catalog. A layout of required courses and rotations for each semester of the M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship is provided to each person interested in applying to the program. Syllabi listing dates with assignments, project due dates, activities, and vacations and holidays are provided to students for all courses.

Below is a depiction of all of the requirements and electives for the entire program:

<b>Rotation Course</b>	<b>Semester</b>	<b>Course Hours</b>	<b>Practice Site</b>	<b>Weeks of Rotation</b>	<b>Supervised Practice Hours</b>
<b>FIRST YEAR</b>					
√NUTR 622 <b>Weight Management I</b>	Summer 2	3	Online		
√NUTR 628 <b>Nutrition Education and Counseling</b>	Fall 1	3	Online		
√NUTR 629 <b>Nutrition and Integrative Medicine and</b> ^NUTR 627 <b>Nutrition and Diabetes</b>	Fall 2	3 OR 6	Online		
√NUTR 633 <b>Nutritional Genomics and</b> ^NUTR 625 <b>Pediatric Nutrition and</b>	Spring 1	3 OR 6	Online		

<b>^NUTR 635 Nutrition for Exercise and Sport</b>					
<b>√NUTR 634 Practice Skills and Current Issues and ^NUTR 632 Nutrition and Eating Disorders</b>	Spring 2	3 OR 6	Online		
<b>√NUTR 626 Nutrition and Assessment and ^NUTR 624 Weight Management II</b>	Summer 1	3 OR 6	Online		
<b>SECOND YEAR</b>					
<b>√NUTR 623 Nutrition and Poverty</b>	Summer 2	3	Online		
<b>Orientation to Internship</b>			Addison Campus	1	40
<b>√NUTR 651 Dietetic Internship I and</b>	Fall	6	Addison Campus and Online		

<b>√NUTR 652</b> <b>Dietetic</b> <b>Internship II and</b> <b>√NUTR 621</b> <b>Nutrition</b> <b>Research I and</b> <b>√NUTR 631</b> <b>Nutrition</b> <b>Research II</b>					
<b>√NUTR 653</b> <b>Dietetic</b> <b>Internship III</b> <b>and</b> <b>√NUTR 654</b> <b>Dietetic</b> <b>Internship IV</b>	Spring	3	Addison Campus		
<b>Medical</b> <b>Nutrition</b> <b>Therapy,</b> <b>Clinical, Acute,</b> <b>Critical, and</b> <b>Long Term Care</b>			Methodist Mansfield Medical Center, BSW Hillcrest Medical Center, Navarro Regional Hospital, Texas Health Rockwall, or Hunt Regional Medical Center, LTAC centers	8-10	360-400
			LTC facility (if needed)	0-2	0-80
			Fresenius Kidney Centers	4	160

<b>Total of MNT</b>				<b>14</b>	<b>560</b>
<b>Foodservice Management and Administration</b>			Dallas ISD, Mesquite ISD, or Garland ISD	4	160
			Culinary Nutrition	2	80
<b>Total of Foodservice, Management and Administration</b>				<b>6</b>	<b>240</b>
<b>Community</b>			Tarrant Area Food Bank	3 or 4	120-160
			Healing Hands Ministries	3 or 4	120-160
			WIC	2	80
<b>Total of Poverty and Community</b>				<b>9</b>	<b>360</b>
<b>Intern Choice of Rotation</b>			Various facilities as available, or assigned rotation	2	80
<b>Total of Intern Choice</b>				<b>2</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Holidays/ Vacation</b>			Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Spring Break, Labor Day	6	

<b>Total</b>		39		32	<b>1280</b>
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√Required courses

^Elective courses – 9 hours are required

\*These rotations split hours between Foodservice and MNT or Foodservice and Poverty and Community

**A sample schedule is shown below:**

<b>Weeks</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Rotation</b>
1-8	June 27 – August 14	NUTR 622 Weight Management I
9-16	August 22 – October 9	NUTR 628 Nutrition Education and Counseling
17-21 and 23-25	October 17 – November 17 and November 27 – December 11	NUTR 629 Nutrition and Integrative Medicine NUTR 627 Nutrition and Diabetes
22	November 20 – 24	Thanksgiving Holiday
25-29	December 12 – January 8	Christmas Holiday
29-36	January 9 – February 26	NUTR 633 Nutritional Genomics NUTR 625 Pediatric Nutrition NUTR 635 Nutrition for Exercise and Sport
37-44	March 5 – April 22	NUTR 634 Practice Skills and Current Issues NUTR 632 Nutrition for Eating Disorders
45-52	April 30 – June 17	NUTR 626 Nutrition Assessment NUTR 624 Weight Management II
53-60	June 25 – August 12	NUTR 623 Nutrition and Poverty
61-68	August 20 – October 7	NUTR 651 Dietetic Internship I NUTR 621 Nutrition Research I



62	August 26 – 30	Orientation at the Addison Campus
63-64	September 2 – September 13	Culinary Rotation
65-68	September 16 – October 11	Fresenius Kidney Centers
69-72	October 14 – November 8	Dallas ISD
69-76	October 15 – November 22 and December 2 - 9	NUTR 652 Dietetic Internship II NUTR 631 Nutrition Research II
73-74	November 11 - 22	WIC
75	November 25 – 29	Thanksgiving Holiday
76-78	December 2 – 20	Texas Health Rockwall
79-80	December 23 – January 3	Christmas Holiday
81-87	January 6 – February 21	Texas Health Rockwall
82-89	January 14 – March 3	NUTR 653 Dietetic Internship III
88-90	February 24 – March 14	HHM Health
90-97	March 11 – April 28	NUTR 654 Dietetic Internship IV
91	March 17 – 21	Spring Break
92-95	March 24 – April 17	Tarrant Area Food Bank
96-97	April 21 – April 29	Intern Choice
98	May 9	Graduation

## Academic and Program Calendar – Dates to Remember

Summer II term start date	June 25, 2024	NUTR 623 Nutrition and Poverty
Fall I term start date	August 20, 2024	NUTR 621 Nutrition Research I, NUTR 651 Dietetic Internship I
Dietetic Internship Orientation	Confirm with Internship Director Estimated start date: August 26, 2024	
Internship Rotations begin	Confirm with Internship Director Estimated start date: September 2, 2024	
Fall II term start date	October 15, 2024	NUTR 652 Dietetic Internship II
Thanksgiving Holiday	November 25-29, 2024	
Christmas Holiday	December 23, 2024 - January 3, 2025	
Internship rotations resume	January 6, 2025	
Spring 1	January 14, 2025	NUTR 631 Nutrition Research II, NUTR 653 Dietetic Internship III
Spring 2	March 11, 2025	NUTR 654 Dietetic Internship IV
M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship Graduation and Master's Degree Graduation	May 9, 2025	
Internship Rotations end	May 16, 2025*	If Flex Weeks are needed

# **Program Courses**

## **Program Course Descriptions**

### **NUTR 610 Medical Nutrition Therapy**

Provides working knowledge of pathophysiology related to nutrition care and medical nutrition therapies. The student will demonstrate the ability to interpret laboratory parameters, calculate and define therapeutic diets, and determine nutrient requirements.

### **NUTR 621 Nutrition Research I**

Overview of the research process used to enhance evidence-based knowledge in the field of nutrition. Includes use of literature reviews, formulation of research questions and study designs, managing a nutritional study, preparing surveys and interviews, and interpreting quantitative and qualitative data. Formulation of research proposal and obtaining IRB approval.

### **NUTR 622 Weight Management I**

Provides working knowledge of pathophysiology, medical nutrition therapies, pharmacology, and surgical procedures related to overweight and obesity. The nutrition care process will be utilized throughout all aspects of nutritional care.

### **NUTR 623 Nutrition and Poverty**

Nutritional effects of poverty in the US and developing countries on physical, education and emotional status of individuals and families. Impacts of government and non-profit programs (including WIC, Food Stamps, and food banks) on nutritional outcomes. Students apply appropriate methods of assisting families with nutritional food choices and budgeting.

### **NUTR 624 Weight Management II**

This course provides working knowledge related to overweight and obesity therapies including physical activity, pharmacology, and bariatric surgical procedures. Fad diets and dietary supplements for weight loss will be reviewed. The nutrition care process will be utilized.

**NUTR 625 Pediatric Nutrition**

Students develop skills needed to direct a school nutrition program by providing healthy meal choices, education for students, and marketing plans that enhance the goals of school nutrition in a cost-effective manner while adhering to all federal and state regulations.

**NUTR 626 Nutrition Assessment**

This course provides comprehensive information concerning the role of nutritional assessment in disease prevention and progression and information concerning objective and subjective measures of nutritional status, including anthropometrics, biochemical measurements, clinical parameters, and dietary assessment.

**NUTR 627 Nutrition and Diabetes**

This course provides information concerning first-line therapy for diabetes, medical nutrition therapy. Current evidence-based recommendations and interventions are presented for Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes for different age groups and complicating conditions.

**NUTR 628 Nutrition Education and Counseling**

Students design effective nutrition education presentations appropriate for different ages and lifestyles. Motivational interviewing and behavior theories are used to guide clients to improved nutrition behaviors. Appropriate evaluations are designed to measure effectiveness of education and counseling approaches.

**NUTR 629 Nutrition and Integrative Medicine**

This course equips dietitians and others providing nutritional advice to look at human beings as whole persons. Individual nutritional needs are affected by genetics, environment, dietary choices, exercise, and lifestyle patterns as well as stress and trauma. Evidence-based research includes digestive, absorptive, and hormonal imbalances.

**NUTR 631 Nutrition Research II**

Overview of the research process used to enhance evidence-based knowledge in the field of nutrition. Includes implementing and managing a research study, interpreting quantitative/qualitative data, and writing a manuscript.

**NUTR 632 Nutrition for Eating Disorders**

This course provides an overview of the various eating disorders, evidence-based treatment therapies, specific counseling techniques that are effective with clients, and tips for working with families. Students utilize case studies and current peer-reviewed journal articles to evaluate various approaches while developing a personal philosophy of treating Eating Disorders.

**NUTR 633 Nutritional Genomics**

This course provides information concerning how diet and genotype interactions affect phenotype. Students will learn to apply nutritional genomics through interpretation of genetic test results and to make personalized nutrition recommendations that result in health benefits and not harm to individuals.

**NUTR 634 Practice Skills and Current Issues**

This course provides instruction in honing skills for entry-level dietetics in various areas of the field. Regulations affecting dietetics are reviewed. The Code of Ethics, Scope of Practice, and Standards of Professional Performance are applied to practice. Current issues will be reviewed.

**NUTR 635 Nutrition for Exercise and Sport** Provides comprehensive, evidence-based information concerning fundamentals of how the active individual can achieve optimal nutrition by appropriate fueling for various sports and activity choices. Includes information on body composition, energy balance, food choices, and supplements before, during, and after exercise.

**NUTR 651 Dietetic Internship I** Provides working knowledge of the domains of dietetics: principles of dietetics, nutrition care for individuals and groups, management of food and nutrition programs and services, and food service systems. Prerequisite: Must be admitted to the M.S. in Nutrition or MS in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship program. Course fee.

**NUTR 652 Dietetic Internship II** Provides working knowledge of the clinical domain of dietetics practice, including the components of the nutrition care process, medication interactions, and the nutrition focused physical exam. Prerequisite: Must be admitted to the M.S. in Nutrition or MS in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship program. NUTR 651. Course fee.

**NUTR 653 Dietetic Internship III** Provides working knowledge of the clinical domain of dietetics practice. This includes the nutrition care process for all ages and medical nutrition therapy for various disease states. Special emphasis on hot topics in dietetics. Prerequisite: Must be admitted to the M.S. in Nutrition or MS in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship program. NUTR 651 and NUTR 652. Course fee.

**NUTR 654 Dietetic Internship IV** Provides working knowledge of the clinical domain of dietetics practice. This includes the nutrition care process for all ages and medical nutrition therapy for various disease states, as well as coding and billing for nutrition services. Preparation for the registration exam for dietitians and professional development will be emphasized. Prerequisite: Must be admitted to the M.S. in Nutrition or MS in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship program. NUTR 651, NUTR 652, and NUTR 653. Course fee.

# Faculty

## **Sheila Jones, PhD, RD, LD**

Interim Director Dietetic Internship

Academic Liaison to the M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship

Associate Chair, Department of Kinesiology & Nutrition

Associate Dean, College of Health and Behavioral Sciences

Associate Professor

*B.S., Texas A&M University, 1981*

*M.S., Texas A&M University, 1988*

*Dietetic Internship, Texas A&M University, 1989*

*L.D., 1989*

*Ph.D., Texas Woman's University, 2005*

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## **Jennifer Gillin, MS, MBA, RDN, LD**

Assistant Professor

*B.S., Baylor University, 2008*

*M.S., Texas Woman's University, 2011*

*M.B.A., Amberton University, 2015*

*Dietetic Internship, Texas Health Presbyterian Dallas, 2011*

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## **Martha Smallwood, EdD, RD, LD**

Associate Professor

*B.S., Abilene Christian University, 1970*

*M.S., Texas Tech University, 1973*

*Dietetic Internship, Houston VA Hospital, 1972*

*Ed.D., Texas Tech University, 2011*

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# Respect for Diversity

The M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship program is committed to creating a learning context that is characterized by the inclusion of multiple groups in the student body and faculty. Further, the faculty and program leadership view matters of diversity as integral to the foundational curriculum and foundational practice component.

The university's mission is to “educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world.” The program aspires to graduate academically competent, ethical, and professionally engaged professionals.

The administration, faculty, and staff of the M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship welcome students who represent diverse identities. We desire to develop an integrated and unified approach, demonstrating true commitment to racial and ethnic inclusion and cultural competence in order to help all students reach their full potential. We are committed to ensuring all students experience a sense of belonging and that faculty and staff are equipped to understand and address all students’ needs. We believe this is representative of what a Christian higher education should be.

## **ACU Dallas Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement**

It is the desire of the ACU community to commit ourselves to promoting and advancing an environment of racial equality on our campus.

We affirm that every person is created in the image of God. We affirm that all people are of inestimable value. We affirm our commitment to the participation of all persons in the life and mission of the university. Because we believe that all are one in Christ, we affirm that the university exists to do Kingdom work, including addressing the ongoing impact of racial, sexist and social injustices.

For more information about ACU Online’s commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, visit the [Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion here](#).



# Program Policies and Procedures

The M.S. in Nutrition program adopts all policies that can be found within the [ACU Student Handbook](#). It is the student's responsibility to understand and comply with all policies. If a student has a question regarding a policy within the ACU Student Handbook or the program handbook, the student can receive clarification from the Program Director.

## **Prior Learning Credit**

Credit for courses taken at an accredited program in another university may be given if determined to be adequately equivalent to an ACU course in the program. This is determined by the academic liaison to the program, who is one of the faculty members teaching in the program, by reviewing the course content and any competencies. Admission Counselors in the online platform are instrumental in gathering and sending that information to the academic liaison. The liaison then advises the Admission Counselors of the decision whether to accept any course as equivalent to an ACU program course so that credit may be applied or denied. No internship hours or competency completion are granted for prior learning, unless a competency in another accredited dietetic internship or coordinated program was completed. In that case, documentation of experiences or competencies must be received from the prior Dietetic Internship or Coordinated Program director. No credit is granted for work experience or for coursework or internship experiences/CRDNs that are not from programs accredited through ACEND.

## **Preparation for Courses and Rotations**

Students are prepared for the M.S. in Nutrition courses by getting syllabi and knowing the requirements before the courses begin and in time to get any textbooks. Faculty converse with students continually throughout and make themselves available for any questions concerning courses in general or concerning assignments.

At all times, students are held to ethical standards, including academic integrity. Professional behavior is discussed in several if not all courses. The Christian focus of the program is also a part of discussions with students, which includes characteristics like integrity, honesty, and striving for excellence in the workplace.

Each Intern is expected to provide the Dietetic Internship Director with a health status report including evidence of required immunizations and other health requirements of rotation facilities, the results of a criminal background check and comprehensive drug screen, and other information facilities may request in accordance with applicable law, including, but not limited to, the Fair Credit Reporting Act. The Internship Director will then provide the necessary information to facilities. ACU does not have a requirement for the COVID-19 vaccine and booster, however, most healthcare facilities do require the COVID-19 vaccine. If an intern chooses not to get the vaccine, this can delay or prevent the intern from completing required rotations where the vaccine is required.

During the internship orientation and throughout NUTR 651 Dietetic Internship I, NUTR 652 Dietetic Internship II, NUTR 653 Dietetic Internship III, and NUTR 654 Dietetic Internship IV, the Director of the Program provides interns with information obtained from Preceptors about the rotations and the background information needed to perform all expected assignments and activities for each rotation. Most rotations have required reading prior to the first day of the rotation. Preceptors will often have written projects or assignments to go along with daily activities, and interns must complete these according to established due dates before they receive a satisfactory evaluation for the rotation. All assignments are required to be uploaded in Canvas. The Program Director will verify that all assignments and projects have been successfully completed before the intern progresses to the next rotation. Any unsatisfactory evaluation is communicated to the intern within one week's time. The intern has a limited amount of time to redo the assignment in order to obtain an acceptable evaluation.

### **Course and Rotation Evaluations**

Each course has multiple means of evaluating progress. Assignments are evaluated in a timely manner so that students have opportunity to ask clarifying questions and to improve performance on future assignments. Final course grades are due two days after the courses end so that students know their grades and GPAs. A course in which a D or below is made for the overall grade of the course must be repeated. Students must maintain a GPA of at least 3.0 in order to graduate from the program.

An evaluation form/rubric is utilized in each rotation. One section is a self-evaluation, which is completed by the intern and turned into the preceptor before the preceptor shows the intern his/her completed evaluation. Both of these are then sent to the Program Director and included in the Intern Portfolio. These evaluations are used to verify that the interns have completed all required rotations successfully. Preceptors discuss each evaluation with the intern, and a signature is required for both the preceptor and intern. The Program Director completes a final evaluation for each intern

that utilizes information from all of the rotations. Evaluations include competencies as well as professional attitudes, work ethic, and ability to utilize critical thinking. On the self-evaluation, the intern is also given an opportunity to suggest improvements or suggestions to make the rotation more meaningful or helpful for interns.

If any rotation evaluation by a preceptor is not satisfactory, the intern meets with the Program Director (who may also request to include the preceptor—either in person or by email or phone or technology). A plan is put in place, with documentation and deadlines, for the intern to improve in future rotations. If the evaluation is significantly unsatisfactory, the intern may be required to redo the rotation before completing the internship portion of the program. No intern may be excused from any rotation, even if prior work experience in the area can be verified.

### **Repeating Courses and Rotations and/or Dismissal**

If the GPA of a student/intern falls below 3.0, the student/intern must repeat courses and attain and maintain a 3.0 in order to graduate from the program. A course in which a D or below is made for the overall grade of the course must be repeated. If a student is unable to repeat a course to raise the grade or the overall GPA or the student cannot improve performance in a course, the student may not graduate in the program. Faculty are responsive to students who are struggling in individual courses and in the program. Individual tutoring by faculty is available and offered for students who need additional instruction.

Rotations or assignments for rotations may be repeated one time if evaluations indicate that competencies were not achieved or behavior did not meet standards. If at any time The Program Director feels that there is minimal chance of success in the program, the Director will meet with the intern to discuss possible alternatives to the internship pathway, such as moving into a dietetic technician program or other field altogether.

If the Program Director determines that an intern has not satisfactorily completed any required remedial assignments or activities due to poor preceptor evaluations on one or more rotations (during the specified time frame), it may be necessary to dismiss the intern from the program. Prior to dismissal, a formal warning is provided to the intern. Then, a review process is instigated which includes the Program Director, the Preceptor(s) if applicable, the Chair of the Department of Kinesiology and Nutrition or Associate Dean of the College of Health and Behavioral Sciences, and the intern. Potential reasons for dismissal could include theft, frequent absences or tardiness, inappropriate behavior with patients or clients, or insubordination with a preceptor or supervisor of a department in a facility.

## **Procedure for tracking individual student's M.S. in Nutrition hours and intern's supervised practice hours**

Each student has an academic adviser through ACU Dallas. The Program Director also functions as an adviser. The adviser counsels the student about upcoming courses and what requirements remain for the M.S. in Nutrition degree.

Interns are required to keep track of all supervised practice hours by utilizing a time sheet provided to them for each rotation. The preceptors sign off on these hours either weekly or at the end of the rotation, depending on the length of the rotation and the preceptor's preference. The Documentation for Supervised Practice Experience Hours form must be uploaded to an assignment for each rotation in the Canvas platform for Dietetic Internship Requirements. Alternate practice activities are minimal, and most consist of case studies and role playing in Orientation. Completion of all activities by each intern is noted in an Orientation Completion document.

## **Affiliation Agreements**

Affiliation agreements must be signed before an intern has a rotation in the facility. Facilities are chosen because they meet a type of rotation need, such as a hospital for a clinical rotation. Before an affiliation agreement is signed the expected adequacy of a rotation site is reviewed. The facility must have a willing and qualified preceptor that can guide rotation experiences and provide the support to attain the CRDNs that are associated with the rotation type.

Agreements are legally binding and address the amount of liability insurance that is covered, the responsibilities of the university and the facility, terms of the agreement, and other information such as testing requirements and confidentiality that is required of the intern.

Standard ACU affiliation agreements are preferred by ACU and are presented to facilities when trying to secure an agreement. Some facilities have their own agreement templates that they require. After the ACU legal counsel reviews any changes to the standard ACU agreement or reviews a facility's agreement that is required, an ACU administrator signs the agreement. If the agreement is the standard ACU agreement or only has minor changes, the Dean of the College of Health and Behavioral Sciences signs the agreement. If the rotation facility wants significant changes or the facility's own agreement is significantly different, the university Provost will sign the agreement.

After a 3-year cycle of assessing CRDNs that are fulfilled in a facility, the adequacy of the internship experiences there is assessed. Intern input is valued concerning the

adequacy and rigor of learning in each facility and with each preceptor. If the rotation is not adequate for program needs, the agreement may not be renewed.

Agreements are maintained in an electronic file and reviewed yearly so that agreements can be renewed in a timely fashion if needed.

### **Verifying Identity During Distance Instruction**

All online tests take place within Canvas through a password-protected environment that students can only access through a Single Sign-on Tool to ensure security and authenticity of student identities. In addition, ACU has Lockdown Monitor that can be used, upon faculty request, to verify student identities. Once enabled, the Lockdown Monitor can check student IDs to ensure the authenticity of their ID. In addition, faculty and the Program Director regularly zoom with students/interns to verify identities in courses.

### **Withdrawal and Refund of Tuition and Fees**

Withdrawing from a Course:

- Students must officially withdraw from a course or the Dietetic Internship portion initiating a withdrawal form.
- A withdrawal grade for the course will appear on the transcript.
- Refunds of tuition will be made according to the Tuition Refund Schedule.
- Fees are non-refundable after the add/drop period.

**Tuition refunds on graduate courses:** Refunds for the 7-week graduate courses are only available for the first 2 days of the course.

### **Withdrawing from the Internship**

*Policies and Procedures Regarding the Return of Federal Title IV and Institutional Funds*

Abilene Christian University calculates and returns Federal Title IV funds according to Federal Title IV policy 34 CFR 668.22. The amount of Title IV funds (other than Federal Work-Study) that must be returned to the Title IV programs is based solely on the length of time the student was enrolled before withdrawing. This policy is effective for complete or full withdrawal from a semester in which the student receives Title IV federal funds. If the student withdraws before 60 percent of the semester has elapsed, a percentage of Title IV funds will be returned to the federal program based on the length of time the student is enrolled prior to withdrawal. For example, if the student withdraws when 50 percent of the semester has elapsed, 50 percent of Title IV funds will be returned to the federal programs. After 60 percent of the semester has elapsed, the student is

considered to have earned all aid received for the semester. The return of Federal Title IV funds depends upon the date the student withdraws during the semester.

**Withdrawal date is defined as one of the following:**

The date the student began the withdrawal process;

- The date the student otherwise provided the school with official notification of the intent to withdraw;
- For the student who does not begin the university's withdrawal process or notify the school of the intent to withdraw, the mid-point of the payment period or period of enrollment for which Title IV assistance was disbursed (unless the university can document a later date); *or*
- The withdrawal date is determined from class attendance records.
- If a student stops attending class, or participating in planned rotations, federal regulations require that ACU consider the student withdrawn for financial aid purposes.

The student/dietetic intern should understand that voluntary withdrawal from the M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship program generally is permanent, and there would not be a possibility for readmission.

**Information About FERPA**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law designed to protect the privacy of student education records. The law applies to current and former students of any institution which received Federal funding, such as financial aid and grants.

When a student reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level, rights of access to educational records transfer to the student from the parent or guardian. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students." Once a student is attending ACU, the rights have transferred to the eligible student and the parental right of access no longer exists.

**What FERPA Means**

If you are a student, it means that no one outside of the University can access your academic record without your permission. You must designate in writing that another person may have access to your education record. If you are a parent, it means that your student must list you (or whomever he/she wishes) in writing, on the Education Record Information Release form. The form is for the sole purpose of giving permission for the person(s) listed to have information about the student's education record. The education record includes, but is not limited to, grades, financial aid information, and

campus life information. The form must be signed and submitted by the student to the Registrar's Office. Students may also retract the form (and thus, retract the right of access for the named person) at any time by coming to the Registrar's Office. Adobe Reader is required to view the form. Once downloaded, the file should be printed, signed by the student, and returned to the Registrar's Office.

### **Annual Notification of FERPA Rights**

Annually, Abilene Christian University informs students of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended. This act, with which the institution intends to comply fully, was designated to protect the privacy of educational records, to establish the right of students to inspect and review their education records, and to provide guidelines for the correction of inaccurate or misleading data through informal and formal hearings. Students also have the right to file complaints with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act office (FERPA) concerning alleged failures by the institution to comply with the Act. Local policy explains in detail the procedures to be used by the institution for compliance with the provisions of the Act. Copies of the policy can be found in the Campus Life office.

### **Disclosure of Student/Intern Records**

Students/interns may access their transcript information from their my.acu.edu account. In addition, they may request access to their personal records associated with the program. In general, no personally identifiable information from a student's education records will be disclosed without written consent from the student. This includes, but is not limited to, grade reports, academic schedule information, transcripts, and identity associated with distance learning. Two exceptions may, however, be made: (1) directory information will be released unless the student requests that it be withheld; (2) records may be disclosed to parents of students who depend upon them as defined by Internal Revenue Code 1986, Section 152.

### **Access to Student Support Services, including health services, counseling and testing and financial aid resources.**

Some of the student support services, such as health and counseling are available on the ACU campus in Abilene. TimelyCare is a FREE Online Healthcare Available 24/7/365, and all ACU students have access to free online medical and mental health care available 24/7/365 from anywhere in the United States by downloading the [TimelyCare app](#) on your smartphone. Students must use their ACU email address to set up their account. Most online visits take less than 20 minutes and patients will receive a diagnosis and treatment plan from a medical doctor, nurse practitioner or

physician's assistant. When indicated, prescriptions can be instantly e-prescribed to the patient's local pharmacy. TimelyCare also offers free online counseling from licensed therapists and so much more.

Testing and resources for University Access programs such as Alpha Scholars for disabilities are found at <https://acu.edu/about/uap/overview-2/apply-2/>. Students may apply for academic accommodations through that site.

Online financial aid resources can be found at <https://acu.edu/academics/online/graduate/master-of-science-in-nutrition-dietetic-internship/>.

### **Employee Replacement**

Rotations for dietetic interns are meant to provide educational learning experiences for the interns. They are not to be used as a way to supplement or take the place of paid employees in a facility. The rotations are based on providing interns the opportunities to achieve the required competencies as set forth by ACEND, and the Program Director verifies that the rotations are providing the needed experiences through regular site visits and evaluations from the preceptors and interns and that interns are not paid any compensation.

### **Policy on Absences, Holidays, Bad Weather, Attendance**

Students are allowed up to three approved absences during the internship year for any reason, including bad weather. Any need for leave beyond this should be approved by the Program Director and would need to be supported by medical documentation. For an unplanned illness or accident, the intern should call the preceptor or email the Program Director at least 30 minutes before the start of the rotation shift. Illnesses or injuries that occur while in a supervised practice facility must be reported to the Program Director immediately, and the policies of the facility must also be followed. For any planned leave, the intern should request it at least one week in advance. Interns are given a form during orientation to request any leave (even for the approved 3 days), and it must be signed by the Program Director or designee within 2 days of returning from the leave. Absences should be made up within 1 week if possible, but 2 Flex weeks are provided at the end of the Dietetic Internship to allow for makeup hours if necessary. Each intern must complete the required hours of supervised practice to complete the dietetic internship. If there is a need for extended leave, due to pregnancy, illness or death in the family, the approval of the Program Director and approval of the department chair is necessary. The intern may make up the leave within 6 months and still obtain a Verification Statement of satisfactory completion.



### **Dress Code and Professional Appearance**

Interns will be expected to dress professionally and appropriate to the specific rotations at all times. Students also need to dress modestly in a manner that portrays a Christian image.

During the year, interns are expected to attend two professional nutrition/dietetics meetings, such as the state nutrition conference or a meeting sponsored by an area dietetic association or health care facility. If an intern wants to attend additional meetings, these would need to be approved by the dietetic internship director.

### **Code of Conduct, Ethics, and Confidentiality**

In addition to increasing clinical and foodservice management skills, interns are expected to incorporate values, skills, and positive attitudes that are needed for optimal professional performance and for being a respected leader in the field. Periodic evaluations will assess the intern's progression toward becoming a responsible, self-directed life-long learner. Other aspects of professionalism are required, including making contributions of time to professional organizations, being involved in community service and addressing healthcare disparities especially for the poor and/or minorities, and being willing to complete jobs that take longer than the minimum hourly requirement.

ACU has an academic integrity policy that is included in the ACU Student Handbook and will be enforced. This policy is progressive in an abbreviated form is as follows: Violations of academic integrity and other forms of cheating, as defined in ACU's Academic Integrity Policy, involve the intention to deceive or mislead or misrepresent, and therefore are a form of lying and represent actions contrary to the behavioral norms that flow from the nature of God. Violations will be addressed as described in the Policy. While the university enforces the Policy, the most powerful motive for integrity and truthfulness comes from one's desire to imitate God's nature in our lives. Every member of the faculty, staff, and student body is responsible for protecting the integrity of learning, scholarship, and research. The full Policy is available for review at the Provost's office web site (<https://cdn01.acu.edu/community/offices/administrative/office-of-the-provost/academic-integrity-policy/overview.html>) and the following offices: provost, college deans, dean of campus life, director of student judicial affairs, director of residential life education, and academic departments.

All Interns sign a confidentiality agreement that extends to all rotations and facilities within any given rotation. In addition, students may be asked to sign additional confidentiality agreements that are specific to facilities where rotations are scheduled. These agreements bind the Interns to protect the confidentiality of information pertaining to patients, clients, staff, and medical records that they encounter during their rotations.

During orientation, Interns can study the latest copy of the Code of Ethics for the Dietetics Profession at <http://www.eatright.org/codeofethics/> and must agree that they have read and understand its contents and agree to abide by all provisions during their Internship and as later in their careers.

### **Grievance/Complaint Procedures**

Resolution is always to begin at the initial level of the dispute. Usually, the student/intern or preceptor should attempt to resolve a dispute with the Director, faculty, or staff person in question. Written documentation of the grievance or complaint is recommended but not required. If written documentation is provided, the Program Director will keep a record on file in accordance with ACEND standards.

If resolution does not occur, the Chair of the Department of Kinesiology and Nutrition should review the issue and is normally able to resolve all disputes within the department. The intern or preceptor may appeal the department chair's decision to the Dean of the College of Health and Behavioral Sciences and finally to the Provost, whose decision is final. Retaliation to students/interns or preceptors because of any complaint is prohibited which is in accordance with policy of the university. The program keeps records of student/intern and preceptor complaints and details of the resolution of complaints for at least seven years.

If the grievance is a program matter for noncompliance with ACEND accreditation standards, resolution should begin with the Program Director. If resolution does not occur, the same procedure as other complaints should be followed, beginning with the Chair of the Department of Kinesiology and Nutrition, then the Dean of Health and Behavioral Sciences, and finally to the Provost. If the matter has not been resolved according to the student's/intern's or preceptor's satisfaction, the intern may complain to the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) concerning program matters by following instructions at <https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/students-and-advancing-education/filing-a-complaint>. ACEND's address, phone number, and email address is given to all prospective and new students/interns:

Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics

120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190  
Chicago, IL 60606-6995  
(800) 877-1600, ext. 5400  
[www.acend@eatright.org](mailto:www.acend@eatright.org).

Any employer of a former ACU dietetic student/intern or a member of the public may also complain to the Program Director and then to ACEND if the matter is not resolved to their satisfaction.

# Student Expectations

Students currently enrolled in M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship program must adhere to the following expectations in addition to policies outlined in the [ACU Student Handbook](#):

## **1. Engaged Learning in an Online Format:**

This online course invites students into a community of engaged scholarship. The course consists of seven weekly modules, with a new module beginning each Tuesday morning in the Canvas LMS (Learning Management System). We expect students to log in to the course frequently, master the course material, whether written or in other digital media formats, and to engage the professor and fellow students through the Canvas medium.

Note: If a student fails to log in the course for the first 7 days of the official course, the student will receive an email notifying them that they are at risk to be administratively withdrawn from the course. The student will have 72 hours to log into the course from that email notification. If the student does not log into the course in that period of time, they will be administratively withdrawn. The last day to withdraw from a course is the Wednesday before the last week of class. Please reference the handbook calendar for a full list of dates. If a student has not participated in the course at any point, before the last week of class the student will be administratively withdrawn. An assignment is defined as a paper, quiz, discussion post, or project in the course. If a life situation occurs that will prevent the student from participating in the course for a brief period of time, the student is responsible for communicating this to their Student Service Advisor and/ or New Student Ambassador, and instructor to make appropriate arrangements.

## **2. Technology Requirements:**

Students should ensure they meet the technology requirements as outlined in the ACU Online Student Handbook, which include regular access to the Internet, a laptop or desktop computer, a webcam, Microsoft Office 365 (free to ACU students), and Adobe Creative Cloud (free to ACU students).

### **3. Paper Specifications:**

In this program, specific instructions for each paper are given in the assignment directions. Please pay attention to the instructions given, such as the number of resources needed and how to cite sources.

Papers should be submitted through the Canvas submission portal as a .docx, .doc, or .pdf files, no email submissions will be accepted. All papers should be neat, contain no misspellings, contain no typing errors, and employ proper grammar and syntax. If your paper contains pervasive grammatical errors, the professor may return the paper without grading it and ask for a rewrite for a maximum grade of 80%. Your faculty will determine the date for submission of the revised paper.

### **4. Late Assignments:**

Assignments are due by 11:59 pm Central Standard time on the due date. Refer to the Canvas Syllabus link or the Canvas Modules link for a list of all due dates. Penalty for late assignments is 10% per calendar day late. Weekend days are counted as late days. No credit will be awarded for late discussion posts. Extra credit will not be available in the courses.

### **5. Grading:**

Grades are awarded based on point accumulation. Each assignment has a maximum number of points that can be earned by successfully completing the assignment. Partial points will be awarded for meeting some but not all of the standards identified for each project or assignment.

Letter grades correspond to the percentage of points accumulated as outlined in the table below. No extra credit will be given.

Range	Grade Assigned
89.5% - 100%	A
79.5% to <89.5%	B
69.5% to <79.5%	C
59.5% to <69.5%	D
0% to <59.5%	F

#### **6. In the Event of an Emergency:**

If you are experiencing an extenuating circumstance that prevents you from submitting work in a timely manner please contact your instructor for the course and your student success advisor. Late assignments due to extenuating circumstances are at the discretion of your instructor. Your instructor and student success advisor will work collaboratively to support you during your time of need.

ACU provides a HelpDesk called "Team 55" which students can call, email or visit to resolve technology-related issues. The university has contracted Instructure to provide 24/7 support for faculty and students in using Canvas for distance courses. There are no additional costs for these services or because the courses are online.

## **Other Expectations**

### **Successful Completion of the M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship**

In order to successfully complete the ACU M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship, all students/interns must maintain a GPA of at least 3.0 on all graduate courses, complete all rotation evaluation forms and present the completed and signed evaluation forms (including self-evaluations) to the Program Director within the designated time frame; and have a satisfactory rating or above on all evaluations. The Program Director will provide additional evaluations on projects and research that are required throughout the program.

To complete the program, each student/intern must successfully complete 30 hours of required and 9 hours of elective courses for the M.S. in Nutrition degree and must

successfully complete all dietetic internship rotation requirements. The amount of time for completing all M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship requirements is 98 weeks from the time the student begins the program. The student/intern will be awarded a Master of Science in Nutrition degree from Abilene Christian University after completion of the program. The Program Director will send in the official paperwork to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, and graduates will receive a Verification Statement indicating their eligibility to sit for the Registration Examination for Dietitians required for credentialing to be a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist. Graduates may apply for state licensure (if available in the state where the graduate resides) after passing the Registration Examination for Dietitians, or the graduate may sit for a State Licensure Examination.

### **Expenses and Financial Aid**

Tuition (Includes 39 hours of graduate coursework and a Dietetic Internship fee)  
Additional costs may be incurred for living expenses, use of a car to drive to rotations, a personal computer, textbooks and supplies for graduate courses, possible fingerprint or background check fees required by facilities; possible immunizations (Hepatitis B, MMR series, Tetanus, and Chicken Pox) or TB tests required by health care facilities, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Student Member Fee (\$50.00), student professional liability Insurance (\$125.00). Each student is required to have access to his or her own transportation to all rotations and to classes that meet at the Opportunity Center in Dallas, Texas. Students are expected to provide their own adequate health insurance and car insurance for protection during the internship.

### **Travel Requirements**

Interns should prepare for and expect long travel commute times to some rotations. Interns must assume all responsibility for safety in travel to or from all assigned areas. Abilene Christian University assumes no liability for any transportation-related accidents that might occur.

- Abilene Interns are expected to attend orientation, culinary rotation, and other activities in the Dallas area and are responsible for travel expenses.

# Financial

# Considerations

## **Estimated Expenses to Intern**

- Total tuition and cost of M.S. in Nutrition/DI rotations program:  
= \$25,350 + \$2,400 (Resource fee) + \$4,875 (Dietetic Internship fee)= **\$32,625**.
  - Per Credit Hour: \$650; Per Course: \$1,950
  - ACU Dallas Resource Fee: \$200 per part of term (6 terms per year)
  - Dietetic Internship fee is \$4,875.
- Cost Breakdown per year:
  - The first-year cost is \$19,500 for 30 hours of coursework + \$1,200 (Resource fee)=\$20,700, but students may live anywhere there is Internet and work at the same time, since these courses are all online.
  - The second-year cost is \$5,850 for remaining 9 hours of coursework + \$1,200 (Resource fee) + \$4,875 (Dietetic Internship fee)=\$11,925.
- Apartment with roommate – approximately \$800/month
- Food and household expenses – Varies
- Books and course-related expenses – approximately \$800
- Travel expense – approximately \$50-100/month
- Physical exam and immunization expenses – approximately \$50-200/year
- Fingerprint and background check fees - \$50
- Drug testing - \$30
- KN95 fit test for clinical sites-\$75
- No cost for verification of student identity for distance learning
- No uniform cost upfront, some rotations may require a certain color of scrubs, approximately \$40 for 1 set.

Although some of these costs may not be required for some internship rotations, interns should expect that they will have these expenses. Interns are not required to purchase professional liability insurance or other type of insurance specifically for the program.

## **TAND Conference**

The Texas Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics hosts an annual conference which is a mandatory requirement for all dietetic interns to attend. This is a 2-day educational



event that is a great opportunity to network with other nutrition and dietetics professionals, learn about new research in the field, and more! Interns may be required to promote program with Program Director on site.

## **Pricing**

Approximately \$440 in total for registration, lodging, and meals.

### ***Cost Breakdown-***

- Registration Rates: Student Member: \$175 (Early bird), \$250 (Standard)
- Lodging: Approximately \$200/night
- Meals: Approximately \$65 in total for meals
  - \$10-15/day for breakfast and \$20/day for dinner
  - 2 lunches provided
  - 1 snack break on last day

**\*In lieu of TAND attendance, FNCE attendance may be offered. Expenses may reflect the location of the national conference.**

## **Financial Aid**

Financial aid is available to students through scholarships and loans. Online financial aid resources can be found at <https://acu.edu/academics/online/graduate/master-of-science-in-nutrition-dietetic-internship/>. First-year students are encouraged to work while taking the required 30 hours of graduate courses. All students are encouraged to apply for scholarships through the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and the Texas Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

# **Student Rights & Responsibilities**

## **Academic Integrity Violations**

While enrolled at Abilene Christian University, the student should expect to:

1. Have rights to an academic integrity hearing conducted at the appropriate level.
2. Meet with the faculty member or other university official responsible for investigating and making decisions with regard to violations of academic integrity.
3. Admit guilt and seek reparation.
4. Have reasonable access to the information in the case file.
5. Review evidence.
6. Present counter evidence and/or witnesses on student's own behalf.
7. Have a non-representative and non-witnessing observer present during all meetings. A student may not be represented by an attorney at a departmental, college, or university academic integrity meeting.
8. Continue attending and participating in the affected classes until all academic integrity appeals have been exhausted.

Additional information regarding ACU's Academic Integrity Policy can be found [here](#) on the Office of the Provost page.

## **Student Complaint Policy**

If a student feels they have not been treated fairly and equitably by anyone associated with the program, they are encouraged to file a Student Complaint as outlined here. The university has established formal policies and processes to handle written student complaints and appeals. Generally, the policies encourage students to resolve concerns at the initial level of concern when possible, e.g., working with the faculty member or department chair to resolve an academic issue. This complaint policy is congruent with the complaint policy under Program Policies and Procedures on pages 34 and 35. To file a complaint or appeal, please select from the list outlined [here](#).

## **Appeals (Grades, Academic Suspension)**

Grade appeals policy for graduate students may be found in the graduate section of the [ACU Catalog](#). The Grade Appeal form is available on the [Registrar's Forms page](#).

## **M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship Student Responsibilities**

The following information can be found in [ACU's Online Student Handbook](#).

### **ACU Online Learning Covenant**

At ACU Online, we have higher expectations. We believe that spiritual commitment demands the highest standards of academic and personal excellence from students, faculty, and staff.

### **Faculty and Staff**

*To enable students to benefit most from their ACU education, faculty and staff must be willing to challenge and be challenged, to achieve as individuals and as team members, to risk failure, to assume responsibility for their decisions and their actions, and to be sharpened and refined by other Christians.*

### **AS ACU ONLINE FACULTY AND STAFF MEMBERS, WE ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE:**

1. to stretch the minds of students as we teach, lead and serve them effectively as Christian scholars and professionals, calling students and colleagues to a rigorous life of learning;
2. to boldly integrate faith, learning and living and to serve with honor and integrity as we help students connect their vocation to the work of God in the world;
3. to demonstrate intellectual, Christian and social leadership that can be imitated as we participate in various campus, community and church activities;
4. to create an environment where students, faculty and staff respect each other and enjoy the blessings of diversity; and
5. to pursue a relationship with Christ, to love God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength, and to love our students as ourselves.

### **Students**

*To benefit most from an ACU education, students must be willing to challenge and be challenged, to achieve as individuals and as team members, to risk failure, to assume responsibility for their decisions and their actions, and to be sharpened and refined by students and faculty.*

### **AS AN ACU ONLINE STUDENT, I ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE:**

1. to stretch my mind in and beyond the classroom by reading, questioning, exploring and committing myself to a rigorous life of learning;
2. to take responsibility for my academic work, embracing feedback from faculty as an opportunity for improvement that will impact my future success;
3. to take responsibility for being knowledgeable about academic requirements, policies, and procedures as they are outlined in the ACU Online Student Handbook and other program-specific handbooks/documents;
4. to engage in deep reflection about my vocational formation;
5. to respect myself and others in my speech, writing and actions, enjoying the blessings of diversity; and
6. to respect the university's Christian perspective on learning and vocational formation and to engage with differing perspectives in a respectful manner.

### **Code of Conduct**

The mission of Abilene Christian University is to educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world. As students seek to further their education and fulfill ACU's mission, their conduct in online programs is expected to reflect the Christian values and expectations of the university. The following Code of Conduct for Online Programs has been established for all students, faculty, and staff. Those who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary sanctions, up to and including dismissal from the University.

Information related to the Code of Conduct including misconduct, communication with the University, relationship with faculty, online interaction tips, and email communication tips can be found on [ACU's Online Student Handbook](#).

### **Required Technology**

- Regular Access to the internet (5 times a week)
- Laptop or Desktop Computer (5 years old or newer; Chromebooks are not be supported)
- Webcam
- Microsoft Office 365 (free for ACU students)
- Adobe Creative Cloud (free for ACU students)

## **Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)**

Students must make satisfactory academic progress in order to maintain eligibility for financial aid. The criteria for this progress are below the requirements of the M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship program.

According to SAP requirements, the minimum acceptable cumulative grade point average requirements are 2.0 for undergraduate students and 3.0 for graduate students. Additionally, students must earn passing grades in a cumulative minimum of 66.67% of the hours attempted. (Undergraduate students in their first 45 credit hours attempted towards their degrees must meet 50% pass rate or higher.) Satisfactory academic progress is measured at the end of each long semester (fall, spring, and summer). The full SAP Policy is available on the Student Financial Services website.

# Thank you!

We are so delighted that you are enrolled in the M.S. in Nutrition/Dietetic Internship program at ACU Online. We are excited to see you grow academically, professionally, personally, emotionally, and spiritually. If you have any questions about the content of this handbook please contact the Interim Program Director:

**Sheila Jones, PhD, RDN, LD**  
**[jones@acu.edu](mailto:jones@acu.edu)**

