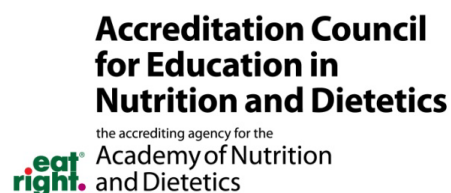


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**ACEND Virtual Town Hall Meeting**  
December 13, 2023, 12:00 p.m. Central Time

**Host: Rayane AbuSabha, PhD, RD**  
**ACEND Executive Director**  
**Presenter: Cheryl Bacon, PhD, RDN, LND, FAND**  
**DAP Task Force Chair**



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**Webinar Recording Link**  
<https://vimeo.com/894274275>

**Below are the questions that were not able to be answered and the resources that were provided during the live town hall.**

- **DICAS use and 100% enrollment expectations**
  - Is there an expectation of requiring 100% program use of DICAS in the future?
  - Do graduate programs have to use DICAS? Are those GPs that use DICAS held to the specified dates?

*ACEND Response:* 100% enrollment in DICAS is not required for the 2024-2025 application cycle. The Dietetics Process Application Task Force (DAP-TF) will be discussing 100% enrollment in spring 2024 and will make a recommendation to the ACEND Board for future cycles.

- Could we have an earlier due date?
- What do other programs have as their deadline for requiring a decision?

*ACEND Response:* Please forward any recommendations for due dates to the ACEND mailbox at [ACEND@eatright.org](mailto:ACEND@eatright.org).

- **Graduate programs**
  - Do you worry about graduate programs that do not use DICAS offering very early admissions?

*ACEND Response:* The DAP-TF intends to minimize the changes for 2024-2025 pilot cycle and did not require all supervised programs (DI, CP, GP) to use DICAS for this upcoming year. The task force will examine this concern as they discuss 100% enrollment in DICAS in Spring 2024 and will make a recommendation to the ACEND Board.

- **Admissions**
  - How does the decision date of April 1<sup>st</sup> work with rolling admissions?

*ACEND Response:* In the proposed plan, April 1 is the applicant decision date. Applicants cannot be required to accept a program's offer prior to this date. A program with unfilled slots after April 1<sup>st</sup> can engage in rolling admission. Reminder that for the 2024-2025 pilot year, these decision dates only apply

to programs using DICAS. (Note: Based on feedback from this town hall, the DAP-TF is discussing a slight shift in these dates.)

- Will there be dates for a fall cycle?

*ACEND Response:* Once the spring admission dates are approved and finalized, the fall admission dates will be developed to mirror the spring process and dates.

- Will programs with two admission dates need to have applicants apply more than once?

*ACEND Response:* ACEND would like to provide programs with as much flexibility as possible and leave decisions up to the programs. Other than the established hard due dates and following the traffic rules (in development), all other decisions will be left to the programs.

- It seems the majority of application deadlines are moving to the fall, do you think this will be the trend?

*ACEND Response:* This decision is left to the program and what works best for their situation; however, it does appear that many universities' graduate programs adopt a fall application deadline.

- **Traffic rules**

- What is the recourse for students or programs for “violating” the traffic rules?

*ACEND Response:* For this first pilot year, students and programs will be notified of the violation. The DAP-TF will evaluate violations received over the pilot year to help inform of appropriate repercussions and process for appeals, if needed.

- Will it be built into ACEND Standards so they can be enforced? What will enforcements/penalties look like for repeat offenders?

*ACEND Response:* Current plans are to propose the Standards Committee consider adding the requirement within the 2027 Standards or in the ACEND Policy and Procedures (P&P) Manual. All ACEND programs must abide by the ACEND Accreditation Standards and follow the ACEND P&P Manual. For fairness and equity to all programs, for ACEND to enforce the rules, all supervised practice program types may need to participate in DICAS.

- **Waitlist**

- Could you clarify how many students programs are able to accept? Will it be based upon their maximum enrollment?

*ACEND Response:* Programs are limited by their maximum enrollment and should not accept more applicants above their approved maximum enrollment limit. The recommendation is that, before the March 15 notification deadline, the program can accept the same number of applicants as they have open spots. For example, for a maximum enrollment of 12, the program should accept only 12

applicants (the number of accepted applicants may be lower than 12 but should not exceed maximum enrollment). At the same time, using the waitlist, a program can place as many applicants on the waitlist as possible. For example, for a maximum enrollment of 12, the program is free to place 25 applicants on the waitlist, or more. There is no commitment to the waitlist, and it will help programs extend offers as soon as they find themselves with open spots.

- What do programs do if they have an open spot?
- Could you provide more information on the waitlist?

*ACEND Response:* Using the waitlist, a program can place as many applicants on the waitlist as possible. For example, a program with 10 spots is free to place 25 applicants on the waitlist, or more. There is no commitment to the waitlist, and it will help programs extend offers as soon as they find themselves with open spots. Guidance on using the waitlist will be provided.

- Can we expect to have a waitlist every cycle?

*ACEND Response:* ACEND would like to provide programs with as much flexibility as possible and leave decisions up to the programs. Maintaining a waitlist is a program's choice. Waitlists are relatively simple to maintain and provide the program with the ability to fill any spots that were rejected by previously accepted applicants. On the other hand, a program may decide not to maintain a waitlist and open their enrollment after April 1<sup>st</sup> to fill any open spots.

- Can a pre-select applicant be waitlisted to general admission?

*ACEND Response:* ACEND would like to provide programs with as much flexibility as possible and leave decisions up to the programs. Waitlisting applicants during pre-select or during regular admission is a program's choice. (Note: Based on feedback from this town hall, the DAP-TF is revisiting the discussion of pre-select.)

- **Acceptance**

- Could we do a "conditional acceptance" where you get accepted assuming you get a required GPA or work experience or other requirements?

*ACEND Response:* ACEND would like to provide programs with as much flexibility as possible and leave decisions up to the programs. Conditional acceptance is a program's choice.

- Could a program reject a student and then accept them at a later date?

*ACEND Response:* ACEND would like to provide programs with as much flexibility as possible and leave decisions up to the programs. Accepting or rejecting students, as long as it is completed with fairness and equity, is a program's choice.

- Can programs that are not approved for pre-select make offers ahead of the timeline?

*ACEND Response:* Based on feedback from this town hall, the DAP-TF is revisiting the discussion of pre-select.

- **Other questions**

- Will students be instructed to request transcripts again in January to include fall semester grades, if they apply to programs that have Nov/Dec due dates as well as Jan/Feb due dates?

*ACEND Response:* Request for transcripts and other application materials remain a program's choice.

- How will DPD directors calculate the supervised practice program acceptance without the match/no match report?

*ACEND Response:* With 100% enrollment in DICAS, DICAS will have the ability to provide reports to ACEND programs, including accepted applicants, rejected applicants, and others. Note that 100% enrollment is not required for the 2024-2025 application cycle.

- How do we continue to market our program? Will ACEND be creating any opportunities to help programs market their program?

*ACEND Response:* The program is able to continue marketing and advertising their program as usual, including the program's homepage, DICAS Application Information Page, NDEP Applicant Guide, ACEND's Accredited Program Directory, and others. With a streamlined application cycle, applicants can filter programs in DICAS based on their desired features and can review the program's information page. Other professions have experienced increased enrollment when all programs participate in a centralized application system, such as DICAS, because it streamlines the application process and improves the advertising of programs within the system.

- If a program has multiple start dates throughout the year, is there only one decision date per year?

*ACEND Response:* The DAP-TF is proposing two decision dates: one for Fall Applications Cycle and one for Spring Application Cycle. During open enrollment, the program is free to set other decision dates. Please forward any recommendations for other due dates to the ACEND mailbox at [ACEND@eatright.org](mailto:ACEND@eatright.org).

- Will there be training available for programs and students?

*ACEND Response:* The DAP-TF is partnering with the Liaison team and planning on developing trainings for programs during Spring 2024. There are also a number of trainings that have been provided about the use of DICAS and WebAdmit here: <https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/program-directors/application-process-for-program-directors/dicas-training-page>.

- Could we have an information session on this at the spring NDEP meeting?

*ACEND Response:* Thank you for the suggestion. ACEND is bringing this request to the NDEP Council.

- Will an infographic be made to clarify this process?

*ACEND Response:* The DAP-TF has already developed a short handout for this process. This handout will be shared as soon as all dates are finalized and after the ACEND January Board meeting.

- Where is the best way to provide feedback regarding the match?

*ACEND Response:* Feedback may be provided by sending an email to the ACEND mailbox at [ACEND@eatright.org](mailto:ACEND@eatright.org).

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Rayane and Cheryl thanked all attendees (332 participants). The call ended at 1:02 pm CT.

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### **Summary of Follow-Up Emails Related to December 13 DAP-Task Force Town Hall and ACEND Response.**

ACEND and the DAP-TF would like to thank all those who provided feedback. Concerns are individually summarized below and followed by ACEND's response.

- April 1 Decision Date when program starts early June. (1 program)
- April 1 Decision Date when program starts May 13-15. (1 program)
- April 1 Decision Date when program has several start dates: spring, fall and winter. (1 program)

*ACEND Response:* Programs concerns are valid and will be considered by the DAP-TF once the final dates for regular admission are finalized.

- Concern about an application process that does not require 100% enrollment in DICAS. Concern about pre-select when there is no match. "All students should apply in the same process to all programs."

*ACEND Response:* The program's concern is valid and is being considered by the DAP-TF. Application cycle 2024-2025 is the pilot year and 100% enrollment will be evaluated for future cycle. The delay was needed to provide programs that do not participate in DICAS the time to review and revise their existing processes. Removing pre-select for the 2024-2025 pilot year is a suggestion that clearly emerged from the town hall and will be a discussion for the task force prior to the January ACEND Board meeting.

- Concern about requiring 100% enrollment in DICAS and added cost to students.

*ACEND Response:* 100% enrollment in DICAS is not required for the 2024-2025 cycle. The DAP-TF will be discussing 100% enrollment in spring 2024 and will make a recommendation to the ACEND Board. Requiring all programs to participate in DICAS provides many benefits to students. It streamlines the process, saves students time and anxiety, and saves the cost of ordering multiple transcripts. For faculty and programs, 100% enrollment simplifies advising and writing recommendation letters, and contributes to fairness and equity across programs. In addition, other professions have experienced increased enrollment when all programs participate in a centralized application system because it streamlines the application process and improves the advertising of programs within the system. For DIs affiliated with graduate programs that require an additional application fee, the DI programs are encouraged to collaborate with college admissions to learn if one application (from DICAS) can be considered for acceptance, and/or if they are able to provide applicants with a coupon code that covers the application fees. Some DI programs have already had success with these approaches. ACEND plans to share some of these approaches in a future town hall.

- Concerns about the fairness of allowing pre-select for certain programs but not for all programs.

*ACEND Response:* This Town Hall has shed light on the need for programs that are not approved for pre-select to make offers ahead of the timeline. ACEND staff will bring this proposition to the DAP-TF for consideration.

- Misunderstanding that Fall match will not be allowed.

*ACEND Response:* After the Spring 2024, there will no longer be computerized matching in the proposed process. The DAP-TF will be addressing and providing Fall admission dates in the near future. Once the spring admission dates are approved and finalized, the fall admission dates will be developed to mirror the spring dates.

- Would ACEND consider allowing programs to extend offers prior to the suggested January 15 date?

*ACEND Response:* Programs can make their offers to applicants at any time before March 15.

- Now that there isn't a match anymore, does this mean that students won't have the opportunity to reapply to programs with available spots that don't receive an initial offer (ie. Second round)?

*ACEND Response:* Programs are encouraged to use the waitlist process which removes the need for an applicant to reapply to a program. Nevertheless, students can apply to as many programs as they wish throughout the application cycle. What was previously known as second round is replaced by open enrollment starting April 2. On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, programs will have the option to go into WebAdmit and re-open their portal if they still have available openings. During open enrollment students who were not admitted to a program can apply to as many programs as they wish, and programs can extend offers immediately per their need. (Note: Based on feedback from this town hall, the DAP-TF is discussing a slight shift in these dates.)

- How many students will ACEND allow each program to accept under this new system?  
Colleges typically accept many more students than they expect to enroll, they know that most people apply to more than one school, and it is virtual certainty that not all of the students they accept will enroll.

*ACEND Response:* Programs are limited by their ACEND approved maximum enrollment and should not accept more applicants above their approved maximum enrollment limit.