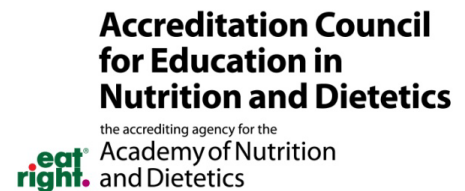

ACEND Virtual Town Hall Meeting
November 15, 2022, 11:00 a.m. Central Time

Host: Rayane AbuSabha, PhD, RD
ACEND Executive Director
Presenter: Jennifer Tomesko, DCN, RD, CNSC
Program Representative at-large, ACEND Board



Webinar Recording Link
<https://vimeo.com/771286194>

Introduction/Announcements: Rayane AbuSabha welcomed all in attendance and introduced Jennifer Tomesko who presented the Town Hall information.

Jennifer indicated the objectives for the virtual Town Hall:

- Present DEI noteworthy practice
- Provide ACEND updates and announcements
- Provide an overview of ACEND’s webinars and trainings
- Present 2021 outcomes data from ACEND programs
- Answer questions

Jennifer introduced Shelley L. DePinto, DHSc, MS, RDN, LDN, an Assistant Professor and the Director of the Didactic Program in Dietetics at Cedar Crest College in Allentown, PA. Shelley then presented “ACEND Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Noteworthy Nutrition and Dietetics Education Practices: A Case Study.” The objectives of the Cedar Crest best practice were to:

- Expand campus participation in activities that combine inclusivity, cultural humility and cultural appreciation with nutrition and health.
- Increase consumption of under-consumed food groups among the campus population.

Shelley’s presentation is captured in the Town Hall slides.

After thanking Shelley for her presentation, Jennifer provided updates from ACEND. She discussed rolling eligibility for Future Education Model (FEM) applications which means applications are accepted throughout the year. Jennifer reminded Town Hall participants of the fees that are waived, training that is provided and networking opportunities for FEM programs.

The ACEND Technology Committee is currently investigating adopting competency assessment software to support ACEND programs’ assessment of the 2022 knowledge and competencies and FEM competencies and performance indicators. ACEND hopes to have a decision on which software to adopt this fall and begin adoption of this software in 2023. This of course will be optional for programs to use; but many who are looking to adopt a software tool may want to consider waiting until hearing from ACEND.

Mark your calendars on Friday, February 17, 2023 for another upcoming ACEND Webinar on DEI: *Cultural Competence and Cultural Humility*. This webinar will be recorded and posted on the ACEND DEI webpage. In May 2023, the final webinar *Racism in Dietetics Practice* is recommended as a training for faculty.

ACEND has begun offering hands-on clinical skills workshops. Programs have until December 31, 2023 to fully implement the new clinical skills knowledge requirement (KRDN 3.4) and competencies (CRDNs 3.3-3.6). For the Graduate Programs under the Future Education Model, the clinical skills are covered in Required Element 3.2.e, skills 1-4. The first clinical skills workshop was held at FNCE in Orlando in October and future ones are planned to be scheduled throughout the United States. ACEND hopes to offer a workshop in conjunction with the NDEP meeting if possible, and is working with several universities including the University of the Pacific in Sacramento, California and Regis University in Denver, Colorado. More information about the workshops will become available as they are scheduled.

ACEND offers several workshops and modules specifically for program directors. These workshops are designed to help dietetic education program directors learn the latest accreditation standards and specific details on how to prepare for site visits and self-study reports. The next workshop that will cover both the 2022 Standards and the Future Education Model FEM Accreditation Standards will be held virtually on February 23-24, 2023. You can register for this workshop under training and resources. <https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/training-and-volunteer-opportunities/training-and-resources/program-directors-workshops>

Jennifer discussed communication with ACEND. ACEND will continue to issue its monthly update, typically sent on the third Tuesday of each month and posted on the ACEND website. ACEND will also continue its virtual Town Hall on a periodic basis. The next Town Hall is set for Tuesday, January 17, 2023 from 11:00 am – 12:00 noon central time. ACEND staff are always available to assist you and answer any questions you may have: 800-877-1600 x5400 and acend@eatright.org

Jennifer then turned the program over to Rayane AbuSabha who provided an update on the 2021 ACEND Annual Report data. These data are captured on the PowerPoint of the slides. Rayane then addressed diversity in the students' step from the DPD to DI programs and ACEND's work to improve retention of underrepresented minority students. The diversity of dietetic internships increased by eight percentage points to 29% in 2020 and it further increased to nearly 30% in 2021. This increase was not seen in any other dietetics program.

ACEND has collaborated with the Academy's Policy Initiatives and Advocacy team to identify federal grant opportunities for dietetics programs. These grants will support the recruitment, retention, and completion of nutrition and dietetics education programs for students from underrepresented backgrounds. ACEND hopes that this resource can act as a catalyst for programs to apply for funding opportunities or advocate for funding that their universities may already receive, and ACEND will update and disseminate this document throughout the year.

Rayane shared that for the past two years the placement rates of DPD students in DI programs has been very high at 98% placement. This means that nearly all the students who apply to dietetic internships are finding placement. In 2020 almost all the students who applied to a DI (4,239) were able to find a supervised practice spot (4,189) which translates to a 97.5% final placement rate. This trend continued in 2021 with 3,999 students enrolled in DI programs of the 4082 who applied (98% final placement rate).

Rayane thanked Jennifer and opened the Town Hall for questions and comments in the chat. These are included below.

Questions/Answers:

ACEND Software

Will the new software that ACEND is purchasing be free to programs? If not, do you have any idea what the cost to use this software program will be?

- Rayane: We are still looking at companies and the fee structure is so different between software companies. The Board will not go with software that would be expensive for our programs.

Clinical Skills Workshop

What is the cost of these clinical skills workshops?

- Rayane: The workshops cost about \$550 per attendee but ACEND is offering a \$400 scholarship for all of those who attend; about 30 individuals per workshop; The out-of-pocket expense for each individual to attend is \$150.

NDEP

RE NDEP workshop on new clinical competencies. Usually our meetings are in person and regional, sometimes virtually because of COVID do you know more about NDEP plans

- Rayane: NDEP has not made the decision yet on whether to be virtual or in person yet. As soon as NDEP has more information they will make that available.

2021 ACEND Program Outcomes:

Is the research data coming after the decision has been implemented? Shouldn't it have been done first?

- Rayane: ACEND did not make the decision to move to the graduate degree. We said all along we would pilot the FEM and review the data. CDR made the graduate degree requirement decision. ACEND and CDR are separate agencies and we made separate decisions.
- Rayane: As programs we must be proud of the profession and make sure your faculty are proud of this profession that provides many multiple advantages, the least of which is life work balance. The students must see the positives of this profession if programs intend to recruit and retain them.

I hear the strong statement that "2024 Mandate is here, can't/won't be changed so please stop complaining about it and just do your job and make it work by supporting your students." OK I get that but - This profession has back pedaled before. When I was in my DPD I was told the Internship would be 900 hours minimum, when I graduated from my DPD that number was changed to 1200 hours minimum (around 2009) then in 2020 that number changed to 900. So we do make mistakes and back pedal but it takes about 1- 12 years....

I believe that CDR can rescind the mandate whenever they like instead of continuing to reaffirm it.

I appreciate Rayane's confidence in DI programs (I am a DI program), but..... I am not confident. Adding the Master's means that my class needs to be accepted into Master's programs, and has two ways to fail (they can fail in the DI and they can fail in the Master's Program) if they fail to be able to afford both, or fail to pass both, they can't be RDNs. It will be MUCH harder and impossible for some students. There is not a lot I can do besides keep one of the lowest cost DI programs running, and search for low cost university partners with low GPA requirements.

I would not want my physician to have lower education standards because of disadvantages in their youth. Why do we want to consider that for RDNs? The solution is to provide the support needed to get those disadvantaged students to the same education standards we want for RDNs. \$\$\$ to support this is clearly a big issue to this end, but it shouldn't divert from the goal. My opinion.

If anyone out there has a Master's program that accepts folks with 2.75 GPA's and doesn't cost too much, let me know!

- from Laura Bollinger to everyone: @Susie Fox, Manchester University's FEM GP program accepts GPA of 2.7+

2021 ACEND Program Outcomes: Pass Rate

What is the first attempt pass rate for each group - as many graduates from low income families may not have the money to keep taking the exam until they pass.

- Rayane: We cannot get the data by groups; I don't believe CDR is able to even ask for that data.

Do you have any data showing passing of the RD exam translates into acceptable performance in the workplace as in the past CDR has indicated they do not have such data?

- Jennifer: ACEND does not have that data. If anyone does exit interviews with their students it may be acquired that way.

What is the n for each of these outcomes (students who took the exam)? So, the first table is for those who took the exam within the first 12 months, not whether they passed? How many students are in the FEM program? How many programs? Also, how many are in each of these groups?

- Rayane: <https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/about-acend/acend-data> 2021 Program Outcomes Tables

2021 ACEND Program Outcomes: Graduates Who Found Jobs

Some Bachelors graduates choose to pursue other professions post-graduation. Do you have any idea where graduates who do not go into dietetics go instead of dietetics? I know some go into P.A. More \$\$\$. Do we know where the DPD graduates who choose not to go into dietetics end up going - it looks like 20% of DPD graduates do not go on to supervised practice. We find that many go to med school, PA, PT, etc. Unfortunately, money is the biggest driving force when students choose careers to pursue.

- Jennifer: Other health care professions. ACEND does not have this data either.

2021 ACEND Program Outcomes: Diversity

Can you share how you defined "underrepresented minorities"? E.g., does it also include white males?

- Rayane: This is the data that programs are indicating in the annual report. It does not include white males. From the website: <https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/about-acend/acend-data> Pg 12 of the Program Outcomes Tables 2021: *URM includes Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino of any race, Asian, American Indian/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, and two or more races

I fear with the 2024 Masters Mandate, we will lower the diversity in our new Dietetics :(Programs have been saying this for years.

- Jennifer: We may not know the results until after 2024 when we look at the data.

- Rayane: We need to get these diverse students into our programs. Let's make sure we don't lose them and be mindful to take advantage of the scholarships and other mechanisms to retain our diverse students. They are needed in the profession.

Might the increase in diversity be related to those trying to beat the CDR 2024 mandate? YES, the Mandate is fueling a lot of folks to hurry up and become RDNS. But ACEND will see that in 2 years when diversity drops :(We definitely saw an increase in applications last year compared to the 2 - 3 years prior, which I attributed to the coming 2024 mandate. The "bump" is probably all the folks who only have a BA or BS. I don't agree with Rayane's reasoning but we'll see. As a DI director, I can say that my program has been able to increase diversity because I have more diverse applicants who tell me they were motivated to get into an internship in advance of the master's mandate.

- Rayane: You bring up a good point; we can look at the next 2 years and see if diversity remains high.

We have seen an increase in diversity and applications from male students go up in the last 5 years, up to 40%, so not sure it is all due to the mandate.

I am very proud of the skills of RDNS who don't have a Master's Degree. I am sad that our profession decided to increase the education requirements for all (except existing practitioners). We don't need Masters degrees to practice, but the next gen will. The DI program without masters degrees had good results and good pass rates and produced good folks without the extra time and expense of a Master's. I wish we would be allowed to do the work.

- Rayane: We have always prepared excellent dietitians and will continue to do so. More than half of dietitians have a master's degree. This is usually an indication that the profession is ready for the graduate degree.

FEM Demonstration Programs

I can see that Rayane wants to highlight the success of the GP program, but..... is it comparing apples to oranges? How many years are the GP folks in school, compared to the Verification Statement Only DI. What is the difference in student debt between those programs? Diversity of the programs? Cost of the programs? Aha there it is, the Verification Statement Only have the most diversity. What I guessed turns out to be true.

- Rayane: The data is available for everyone to see and make their own conclusions. Please access the ACEND website and review the data and make your own conclusions. The FEM GP programs had the strongest outcomes and this was significantly different than most other ACEND programs. That is what the data are showing.

Can we breakdown the data of GP programs that require a DPD verification statement vs those that do not require a DPD verification statement? In terms of 1st time pass rate?

- Jennifer: In data we get from CDR, this is not provided. This would be data that programs would need to share with ACEND. I collect these data in my own program.

With the FEM, is it correct that a DPD verification is not necessary? If Programs are not requiring DPD verification statements - why should DPD programs continue to be accredited by ACEND - as it is a very expensive process for universities.

- Jennifer: That is correct. ACEND does not set requirements for either a DPD verification statement or pre-requisite courses. It is up to the program to determine what is needed for admission.
- Rayane: 60% of the programs now require DPD Verification Statement while the remaining 40% of graduate programs do not require it. There are about 100 DI programs that still require the DPD verification statement. We are hearing that graduate DPDs are very desirable. With the FEM not requiring the DPD verification statement it permits a group of people who come from other academic backgrounds to enter the profession.
- from Makayla Schuchardt to everyone: @Pat - the FEM program can decide to require or not.

I've heard of DPD grads having to teach non-DPD grads how to write ADIME notes! In GPs.

- Rayane: ACEND has heard that DPD graduates are very strong and more desirable candidates for the GP

And, as many of us are elevating our supervised practice programs to the MS level, we may not intend to elevate our didactic coursework to the MS level. Therefore, we need the DPD undergraduate to remain accredited.

Other

NDEP has data from 3 surveys of students who were eligible for supervised practice and their program directors - this data has already been shared but can be shared again if requested. These surveys were conducted in 2019, 2020, and 2021

Can you add a question to the DPD annual survey - an open ended question - asking directors to estimate percentage of students not entering supervised practice and where they are going - so we can get the student survey response and also input from program directors

- Rayane: ACEND will look into this.

Rayane and Jennifer thanked everyone (137 participants) for their discussion on the Town Hall. The call ended at 12:05 pm CT.