

Season's Greetings from ACEND. As we enter the holiday season, we thank you for all that you do to help educate the next generation of nutrition and dietetics practitioners. We value the input you are providing us for our work on the future accreditation standards. We wish you all the very best this holiday season. ACEND Board and Staff

- **FNCE® Round Table Discussion**

Thank you to the 200+ educators and practitioners who attended the Round Table discussion at FNCE. ACEND received valuable input on a variety of topics and concerns. Topics discussed grouped into the following:

- Prerequisites, content and rigor of the future master's degree
- Inclusion of community nutrition and public health competencies at all degree levels
- Concern for use of title "technician" for the bachelor's degree prepared practitioner and "worker" for associate's degree prepared practitioner
- Future plans for current programs
- Resources (doctoral level faculty, preceptors, experiential learning opportunities) needed to for future programs
- Impact on cost of education and diversity of students
- Timeline, transition process, support needed, and pilot program requirements for new degree programs
- Communication

All of the table discussion information has been shared with the ACEND Board and the ACEND Standards Committee/Expanded Standards work group and will be included in their continued discussion and planning for the future education model standards and competencies. Information collected on potential criteria for pilot programs and potential outcome measures for pilot programs will be shared in a future update.

- **FNCE® ACEND Forum**

Thank you to the 100+ educators and practitioners who attended the ACEND Forum presentation. Dr. Sue Leson, the current chair of the ACEND Standards Committee, gave an update on ACEND's work on the revision of the 2012 Standards that will be released as the 2017 Standards. A draft of the 2017 Standards is anticipated to be available for your review and comments in February, 2016. An update of ACEND's work on the future education model also was provided (See the October Standards Update at www.eatright.org/acend). Dr. Cathy English and Dr. Barbara Woodland shared their collaborative efforts in developing an innovative partnership between the University of Rhode Island and Sodexo, which resulted in a program that integrates a distance master's degree in nutrition and food science at the University of Rhode Island with the Sodexo dietetic internship. For those who were not able to attend the session, the session was recorded and is available at <http://starlibraries.com/fnce>. The questions asked and responses are included in the recording.

- **ACEND Virtual Town Hall**

Thank you to the 40+ individuals who participated in ACEND's first virtual town hall. Many good questions were raised. The questions and ACEND's response will appear in this and future updates. Please join ACEND for its next virtual town hall scheduled for Thursday, December 10 at 11:30 CT.

- **For additional information**

- Review information on the ACEND Standards Committee Website www.eatrightacend.org/ACEND/Standards.
- Participate in a monthly ACEND virtual town hall on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 11:30 CT; information on how to connect to the town hall available at www.eatrightacend.org/ACEND/Standards.
- Contact ACEND (acend@eatright.org; 312-899-4872)

Questions That Have Come to ACEND

Question: What is the difference between interdisciplinary and interprofessional education?

ACEND Response: Although the terms interdisciplinary and interprofessional education are related and sometimes used interchangeably, they differ in an important way. Interdisciplinary education typically implies that individuals from different disciplines are provided opportunities work together and share information that each has about his/her own discipline. Interprofessional education is typically described as a much more involved and interactive educational process in which nutrition and dietetics students learn about, with and from students from other professions.

Question: Will Didactic Programs in Dietetics (DPD) be required to have experiential learning in the 2017 Standards?

ACEND Response: Although the 2017 Standards have not been finalized, there is not an expectation at this point that the 2017 Standards will require DPD programs to have experiential learning for their students. The 2017 Standards for DPDs will state the expected knowledge that graduates will need to have; programs will determine how that knowledge is obtained. All currently accredited DPDs will be expected to come into compliance with the 2017 Standards for DPDs. What may be causing some confusion is that the standards for the future education model bachelor's degree program, which is different from the DPD, will require experiential learning. The standards for the future education model bachelor's degree program are expected to be available in 2017 for adoption by pilot programs. Current DPD programs will not be required to come into compliance with the future model bachelor's degree program standards.

Question: How will the education of the dietitian nutritionist at the master's level differ from that of the current bachelor's degree prepared dietitian nutritionist?

ACEND Response: While the specific competencies (knowledge, skills, and abilities) for future education at the master's level have not been finalized, they are being developed to align with input from educators, employers, and practitioners. Stakeholders indicated the need for a generalist dietitian nutritionist who has a more complex and deeper breadth of knowledge, stronger critical thinking ability, and additional clinical skills to address an expanding scope of practice. Areas of the curriculum such as research, management and leadership, patient assessment, prescriptive authority, interprofessional work, counseling, critical thinking and behavior change likely will be strengthened in the future education model master's degree programs as compared to current bachelor's degree programs. The competencies expected of future master's degree prepared graduates will be at a higher level of practice than those currently expected of bachelor's prepared graduates.

Question: What is the expected timeline for release of the future education model standards and the acceptance of pilot programs?

ACEND Response: ACEND is working on the future education model standards and the competencies to be expected of graduates of the future education model associate's, bachelor's and master's degrees. ACEND anticipates releasing the draft standards for the future education model programs in late summer/early fall 2016 for public comment. ACEND will revise the draft standards and hopes to have the final standards released for pilot program adoption in 2017. Criteria for the pilot programs and the process for becoming a pilot program have not yet been finalized.

Question: Will associate's degree programs who currently prepare dietetic technicians be eliminated in 2017?

ACEND Response: The current 2012 Standards for dietetic technician (DT) programs are being reviewed and revised and will be released as the 2017 Standards. All existing DT programs will be expected to come into compliance with the 2017 Standards. There have not been any decisions made at this time to eliminate associate degree DT programs; these programs will continue to be accredited by ACEND.

Question: Will DPD programs need to combine with dietetic internships (DI) that have master's degree programs to do the proposed future master's degree program or will DPDs or DIs go away?

ACEND Response: ACEND believes there may be many ways that future model bachelor's and master's degree programs might be organized. The key difference from the current DPD/DI model is that the future model bachelor's and master's degree programs will incorporate the experiential learning with the didactic preparation. Students will apply once for a program that includes both components. One of the goals of the pilot programs is to identify creative ways that university-based and operations-based programs collaborate to prepare students under the future model. The future education model bachelor's degree program and master's degree program are viewed as two separate programs. At this point, ACEND does not anticipate that the standards for these programs will specify that one is a requirement for the other. Individual master's degree programs, for example, will determine the prerequisites for students to enter their programs; master's degree programs could choose to require completion of the ACEND accredited bachelor's degree program as a prerequisite. At this time, ACEND will continue to accredit DPD and DI programs for preparing dietitian nutritionists while data are collected from the pilot programs. Once ACEND has reviewed the data, it will make decisions about which types of programs will be accredited going forward.

Question: Will registered dietitian nutritionists who do not have a graduate degree, need to get one by 2024 to maintain their jobs?

ACEND Response: CDR makes decisions on the criteria for the earning and maintaining the RDN credential. The CDR FAQ on Graduate Degree Registration Eligibility Requirements, available on the CDR website www.cdrnet.org, indicates that current RDNs, who do not have a graduate degree, will not have to obtain a graduate degree to maintain their RDN credential. The January 1, 2024 deadline for having a graduate degree only applies to initial applicants for registration eligibility. Employers will determine criteria for RDN positions in their operations.

Question: How are stakeholders being kept informed through the development of the future model standards and competencies?

ACEND Response: ACEND is involving stakeholders (practitioners, educators, employers, administrators, students) at each step of the process and seeks input on recommendations on each step in attempt to be very transparent about and inclusive in the process. Information is stored on the ACEND Standards Committee webpage (www.eatrightacend.org/ACEND/Standards). ACEND been sending out monthly updates to stakeholders as well. Those receiving these updates are encouraged to share them with others who might have interest in this work. ACEND began a monthly virtual town hall on the second Thursday of each month to provide a time for discussion, questions and comments about ACEND's work. Information for connecting to the town hall is available on the ACEND Standards Committee webpage (www.eatrightacend.org/ACEND/Standards). The next virtual town hall will be held on Thursday, December 10th at 11:30 CT. Any questions or comments you might have about the recommended future model and the process being followed can be emailed to acend@eatright.org.