

**REVISED 2017 STANDARDS RELEASED FOR COMMENT!**

ACEND has made some slight changes to the *2017 Accreditation Standards*. The revised documents are available on the ACEND Standards Website at [www.eatrightpro.org/2017Standards](http://www.eatrightpro.org/2017Standards). Public comments on the revised standards can be made at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2017StdComments> until December 4, 2017.

This spring several programs were reviewed under the *2017 Accreditation Standards*. ACEND has received comments from program directors and reviewers on clarifications that could be made to the wording in the standards. In addition, in July, the ACEND Board made the decision that effective immediately, ACEND will evaluate the one-year pass rate (pass rate of students who pass the registration exam within one year of first attempt) over a three-year rather than a five-year period. This decision was made after reviewing results of two research projects that evaluated factors impacting pass rate, assessing program pass rate improvement plans and monitoring the time period for programs to demonstrate improvement within the USDE mandated compliance timelines.

**Proposed Changes to the 2017 Accreditation Standards:**

- Combine RE 3.3 and RE 3.4 into one RE with two subsections
  - Program Specific
  - ACEND Required
- Indicate that all ACEND-Required objectives must be evaluated annually using an average of data from the previous three years
- Change language to clarify expectations
  - Change “expected to be” to “are employed” “take exam” etc.
- Clarify in RE 4.1.g that data on ACEND-required objectives are to be collected annually
- Clarify in RE 4.2 that targets set for objectives must be met and program changes need to be made to improve outcomes for objectives not met
- Reverse RE 5.1 and RE 5.2 so curriculum content comes before curriculum map

Track changes versions of revised *2017 Accreditation Standards* are available at: [www.eatrightpro.org/2017Standards](http://www.eatrightpro.org/2017Standards). Public comments on the revised standards can be made at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2017StdComments> until December 4, 2017.

**ACEND Events at FNCE®:**

- Sunday, October 22, ACEND Forum: Showcasing Innovation as a Future Education Model Demonstration Program, 10:00 am – 11:30 am – McCormick Center, Rm 184 ABCD
- Monday, October 23, ACEND/CDR Educator’s Round Table, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm – Hyatt Regency McCormick, Regency AB
- Monday, October 23, Individual meetings with ACEND Managers, 12:30 – 1:30 pm – Hyatt Regency McCormick, Regency AB
- Sunday, October 22 – Tuesday, October 24 – ACEND Booth

## For Additional Information

- Review back issues of the monthly ACEND Standards Updates that are posted on the ACEND website [www.eatrightpro.org/FutureModel](http://www.eatrightpro.org/FutureModel).
- Participate in a monthly ACEND virtual town hall on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 1:00 pm CT; information on how to connect to the town hall is available at [www.eatrightpro.org/FutureModel](http://www.eatrightpro.org/FutureModel).
- Contact ACEND (acend@eatright.org; 800-877-1600 x5400).

## Questions That Have Come to ACEND

This section includes questions that have been raised during town hall and in-person meetings, on phone calls or through emails and ACEND's response to each. The following questions are divided into several sections: FNCE, 2017 Accreditation Standards, Future Education Model Accreditation Standards and Demonstration Programs.

### FNCE®

**Question:** *Is it possible to meet with an ACEND program manager at FNCE?*

**ACEND Response:** ACEND program managers will be available at the ACEND booth Sunday – Tuesday at FNCE. There is a special time set aside for one-on-one consulting by ACEND program managers with program directors on Monday, October 23 (immediately following the round table discussions) at 12:30 pm in the Hyatt Regency McCormick, Regency AB. Please contact your program manager or ACEND ([acend@eatright.org](mailto:acend@eatright.org)) to schedule a meeting during that time.

### 2017 Accreditation Standards Questions

**Question:** *Can a program submit their revised curriculum map and student learning outcomes assessment plan prior to the January 3, 2018 deadline?*

**ACEND Response:** To show compliance with the *2017 Accreditation Standards* all programs are required to submit a revised curriculum map and student learning outcomes assessment plan prior to January 3, 2018. Those documents can be submitted at any time between now and January 3<sup>rd</sup>. Completed materials can be sent to ACEND at [standardscompliance@eatright.org](mailto:standardscompliance@eatright.org). See <http://www.eatrightpro.org/resource/acend/accreditation-standards-fees-and-policies/2017-standards/notification-of-materials-due> to learn more about how to verify compliance with the *2017 Accreditation Standards*.

**Question:** *A number of DPD programs have indicated a drop in enrollment. What is ACEND doing to assist programs with increasing their enrollment numbers?*

**ACEND Response:** The Annual Report data from this past year did indicate a decrease in DPD enrollment, consistent with the decrease in college undergraduate enrollments nationwide. The number of DPD graduates still exceeds the number of supervised practice openings. ACEND has focused its efforts on trying to increase the numbers of supervised practice openings by continuing the Individualized Supervised Practice Pathway and accrediting new internship programs. Although the number of supervised practice openings has increased nearly 30% since 2010, the increase has not kept up with what had been a higher increase in DPD graduates during that time.

**Question:** *Do you see a decrease in enrollment in programs who are now incorporating a master's degree; one of the VA internships typically received more than 200 applications and after offering a master's degree combined with the internship, they only received 27 applications?*

**ACEND Response:** ACEND has not examined numbers of applications received by programs. According to data received in the Annual Report, internship enrollment increased more than 5% in 2016 compared to 2015. ACEND has not done an enrollment assessment of individual program enrollment based on whether the program offers a master's degree. Currently about 20% of internships have a required master's degree and another 20% offer students an option for graduate credit or a graduate degree with the internship.

**Question: The September Standards Update used the phrase “programs accredited under the 2017 Accreditation Standards...: in several responses. What about programs still accredited under the 2012 Accreditation Standards?”**

**ACEND Response:** When the ACEND Board released the *2017 Accreditation Standards* in the summer of 2016, the Board voted that all programs currently accredited under the *2012 Accreditation Standards* would need to come into compliance with the *2017 Accreditation Standards* by June 1, 2017 to maintain their accreditation (see [www.eatrightpro.org/2017Standards](http://www.eatrightpro.org/2017Standards)). Thus as of June 1, 2017, no programs continue to be accredited under the *2012 Accreditation Standards*; all are accredited under the *2017 Accreditation Standards* and are expected to be compliant with those standards.

**Question: Related to pass rates, has consideration been given to the length of time that passes for a DPD graduate who goes on to do a master’s degree and internship before taking the RD exam? How can a DPD program be held accountable for these students’ pass rates?**

**ACEND Response:** ACEND monitors the exam pass rates for DPD programs because they prepare students with the knowledge needed to be successful in supervised practice and on the registration exam. Note that students who take the registration exam more than five years after graduating from a DPD are not included in the Pearson VUE exam pass rate report for that program.

## **Future Education Model Accreditation Standards Questions**

**Question: When do the Future Education Model Accreditation Standards go into effect?**

**ACEND Response:** The *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards for Associate, Bachelor’s and Graduate Degree Programs* were released for adoption only by demonstration programs earlier this year. They are not required of programs and no date has been set for when they may be required of all programs. ACEND will collect outcomes data from demonstration programs before making decisions about implementation of the standards.

**Question: Has ACEND worked with other accreditors such as pharmacy and physical therapy to learn what they did when they launched their standards specifying a higher degree requirement?**

**ACEND Response:** ACEND has had many conversations with other accreditors to learn the process they used and challenges they faced in implementing new standards. One of the public members on ACEND’s Board, who was also involved as part of the Visioning Group early in the standards development process, is a physical therapist who served as Vice President of Education for the American Physical Therapy Association and has provided valuable input into ACEND’s work on the development of the *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards*.

**Question: Does the U.S. Department of Education specify a process that an accreditor must use when making changes to its standards?**

**ACEND Response:** The US Department of Education (USDE) regulations 34 CFR Part 602 specify requirements for accrediting agencies to be recognized by the Department. Those regulations indicate that to be recognized as an accrediting agency, the agency must “demonstrate that it has standards for accreditation that are sufficiently rigorous to ensure that the agency is a reliable authority regarding the quality of the education or training provided by the programs it accredits”. The regulations also stipulate that “the agency must maintain a systematic program of review that demonstrates that its standards are adequate to evaluate the quality of the education or training provided by the institutions and programs it accredits and relevant to the educational or training needs of students”. The USDE regulations do not specify a process that accreditors must use to develop new standards but do state that “before finalizing any changes to its standards, the agency must: (1) Provide notice to all of the agency’s relevant constituencies, and other parties who have made their interest known to the agency, of the changes the agency proposes to make; (2) Give the constituencies and other interested parties adequate opportunity to comment on the proposed changes; and (3) Take into account any comments on the proposed changes submitted timely by the relevant constituencies and by other interested parties”. ACEND continues to update its *Rationale Document* (found at [www.eatrightpro.org/FutureModel](http://www.eatrightpro.org/FutureModel)) to provide information to stakeholders on its process in developing the *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards*, summaries of input received from calls for public comments on proposed changes and decisions made based on the input. ACEND will continue to provide updates as it launches the demonstration programs and ask for stakeholder input. Comments about ACEND’s standards can be made at any time by writing [acend@eatright.org](mailto:acend@eatright.org) or calling 800-877-1600 x5400.

**Question: Did other accreditors test their new standards first or did they just mandate them?**

**ACEND Response:** When other accreditors have made the decision to increase the competencies and the degree level, they have not used demonstration programs to test them. They have announced the new standards and a date (typically 10 years or more in the future) when all programs would be expected to be compliant with those new standards.

**Question: How did ACEND solicit input on the Future Education Model Accreditation Standards from practitioners who are not Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics members?**

**ACEND Response:** All of ACEND's surveys that have been done whether collecting data or asking for public comment on proposed standards have been emailed to all credentialed RDNS and NDTRs in addition to all Academy members. These emails encouraged the recipient to share the email with others who might have interest in providing input on ACEND's work.

## **Demonstration Program Questions**

**Question: Can an application for a doctorate level program be submitted under the Future Education Model Accreditation Standards for Graduate Degree Programs?**

**ACEND Response:** Applications for doctorate degree demonstration programs can be submitted under the *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards*.

**Question: Is there a minimum number of demonstration programs and graduates that ACEND has set for evaluation of the Future Education Model Accreditation Standards?**

**ACEND Response:** ACEND desires at least five demonstration programs at each degree level, but will accept up to 60 total programs in the first cohort of demonstration programs. ACEND is seeking a varied sample of programs in terms of geographic location, program size, and proposed program structure for the demonstration programs. ACEND's statistician has recommended a minimum sample size for data analysis of at least 100 graduates for each program degree level to achieve a 95% confidence level with a 10% confidence interval. ACEND plans to have two or three cohorts of demonstration programs and anticipates having many more than the minimum number of programs and graduates on which to evaluate outcomes of programs accredited under the *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards*.

**Question: Will the research plan for data collection be shared and will stakeholders have a chance to provide input on the plan?**

**ACEND Response:** ACEND began work on developing its plans for data collection related to the demonstration program project more than a year ago. The Educator Round Table session at FNCE in October, 2016 and the April 2017 Standards Update newsletter included a request for input on the proposed demonstration program process and the planned data collection. The ACEND Forum presentation at FNCE this October (Sunday, October 22, 10:00 am – 11:30 am, McCormick Center, Rm 184 ABCD) will include a presentation of the project aims, objectives and planned data collection and input will be solicited again at the Educator Round Table session. The November 2017 Standards Update newsletter also will focus on the planned research process. ACEND welcomes comments on the proposed research plan. Comments can be made orally at the FNCE events or emailed to [acend@eatright.org](mailto:acend@eatright.org).

**Question: Will ACEND share the names of the programs selected as demonstration programs?**

**ACEND Response:** ACEND will share the names of the programs selected as demonstration programs. These programs also will be listed on ACEND's website.