
Introduction/Announcements: Janet Johnson welcomed all in attendance and reviewed the objectives for today's Town Hall.

- Provide an overview of ACEND
- Differentiate between the *2017 Accreditation Standards* and the *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards*
- Describe the link between competency-based education and employability
- Detail the benefits of being a demonstration program
- Answer questions

Janet reviewed ACEND's mission, responsibilities and accreditation with the US Department of Education. She then thanked those on the Town Hall who are current program reviewers for ACEND. Janet encouraged those who are not reviewers to consider becoming a program reviewer as ACEND needs both educators and practitioners as reviewers. Program reviewers are eligible to serve on the ACEND Board.

Janet then discussed key differences between the 2017 and Future Education (FEM) Accreditation Standards. She clarified that the 2017 Standards do not require a master's for any programs preparing students to become registered dietitian nutritionists and do not require a bachelor's degree for programs preparing nutrition and dietetics technicians registered. She discussed the three main options that programs have:

1. Make No Change to Current Program
 - CP, DPD, DI, DT, FDE, IDE programs continue to be accredited under 2017 Standards
 - Discuss with students options for meeting the CDR registration exam eligibility requirements
2. Request a Substantive Program Change
 - Program change to incorporate a master's degree in current accredited program
3. Apply to be a Demonstration Program
 - Demonstration programs will be accredited under the *Future Education Model Standards*

Janet then discussed the services performed and settings for practice for the FEM-prepared Registered Dietitian Nutritionist, the Nutrition and Dietetics Technician, Registered and the Nutrition Health Associate.

One of the key differences between the 2017 standards and the FEM standards is the heavier shift towards competency based education and assessment. The definitions and examples of competent, competence, competencies and competency-based education were discussed. Alternate experiences and real-world experiences were discussed as were number of experiential learning hours and hours of alternate experiences.

Janet mentioned that the competencies and performance indicators required in the FEM Standards will allow graduates to create functional resumes that the environment in which the student practiced

his/her skills. CBE programs are uniquely positioned to convey a graduate's spectrum of skills which makes them more desirable to employers.

Janet then reviewed the objectives of the FEM demonstration programs. She indicated the numerous benefits to programs that participate: training, national recognition, networking opportunities, financial and evaluation of the ACEND Accreditation Standards. Data that programs are required to collect was discussed. Janet closed by mentioning the December 2, 2019 due date for Cohort 4 applications and this cohort's training dates in 2020. A program director training on the FEM Accreditation Standards is scheduled in Chicago on August 15-16, 2019.

The next town hall is scheduled for Tuesday, November 12, 2019 at 11 am Central Time.

Questions/Comments:

General Questions

Question: I am trying to access the program reviewer application but am going in a loop (I am logged in to eatright.org) Is there something wrong with the link to the program reviewer application?

ACEND Response: The active link to the program reviewer application is:

<https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/training-and-volunteer-opportunities/program-reviewers>

Question: It is unclear how long one can operate under the 2017 Standards and when the FEM Standards must be implemented. Can you clarify?

ACEND Response: CP, DPD, DT, and DI programs do not need to shift to the future education model by 2024. All currently accredited programs will continue their accreditation under the *2017 Accreditation Standards* which will be revised in 2022, and possibly in 2027. The *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards* are only available for programs that volunteer to serve as demonstration programs. Data will be collected on the demonstration programs and their graduates and reviewed by ACEND prior to any decisions being made about implementation of the new standards. Once a decision is made, ACEND will work with all programs to help them reorganize into the final set of standards adopted.

Information about Future Education Model Programs

Question: There are currently 12 programs listed on the FEM Graduate Program page on eatright.org. This seems a low number - are the 3rd cohort programs posted here? Will they be posted? The website I'm referring to is: <https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/accredited-programs/future-education-model-graduate-program>.

ACEND Response: The board has currently approved 13 FEM programs in total:

- 12 FG programs posted at: <https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/accredited-programs/future-education-model-graduate-program>
- 1 FB program posted at: <https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/accredited-programs/future-education-model-bachelors-programs>

Another 45 programs are in process. The names of programs categorized as a reorganization will be posted on the above pages of the ACEND web site after they receive approval for their reorganization from the ACEND board. Candidacy programs, in addition to the above ACEND webpage, have their information posted on a second webpage to announce their candidacy site visits. As a USDE recognized accreditor, ACEND is required to post the names of programs that are being considered for candidacy status and provide an opportunity for third party comment. Once the site visit is scheduled for a demonstration program categorized as a candidacy, ACEND posts the program's name and site visit date on its Web site here: <https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/public-notices-and-announcements/programs-under-review>. We do not have any Future Associate (FA) programs yet. Adoption of the FA programs has been slow, a similar pattern to what occurred when the DT programs began.

Question: You mentioned that programs under candidacy status with FEM are listed on the ACEND website. Will you consider making a list of those who have submitted an application but have not yet been awarded candidacy? This way, we know if a neighboring school is already working on a FEM program in a competitive geographic area.

ACEND Response: When the ACEND board approves a program's request to reorganize an existing program or grants candidacy to a new program under the *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards*, the program's information will appear on the ACEND website. As a USDE recognized accreditor, ACEND is required to post the names of programs that are being considered for candidacy status and provide an opportunity for third party comment. ACEND posts the program's name and site visit date on its Web site here: <https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/public-notices-and-announcements/programs-under-review>. These are posted approximately six months to one year before programs are awarded candidacy.

ACEND does not publicize non-accredited programs to protect the confidentiality of the programs. Once the board has approved the request for reorganization or approved candidacy status then these are considered to be accredited programs.

Research Logic Model and the Future Education Model Programs

Question: What will the outcome data from the FEM Standards be compared to? Do you have a control group such as the 2017 DPDs and DIs?

ACEND Response: The FEM program outcome data will be compared to data from other ACEND accredited programs and include pass rate data, employer data, as well as other indicators. A number of questions have been added to the annual report that will be used for the comparison to the FEM program outcome data.

Question: When do you expect data on the FEM Standards to start coming out, and how will this data be shared?

ACEND Response: The ACEND board has just begun collecting the data from the two initial FG programs that started fall 2018, Hunter College and Rutgers University. As programs begin to graduate students, ACEND will continue to collect data on graduate outcomes and will survey graduates and employers. Results will be shared through our communication channels such as town hall meetings, NDEP regional meetings or FNCE forums.

Admission Criteria for Future Education Model Programs

Question: Is there any consideration being given to allowing FEM programs to participate in DICAS?

ACEND Response: This is an NDEP decision. NDEP has established a task force to examine the issue of programs participating in DICAS, specifically the FEM programs. Programs are encouraged to contact NDEP for questions about the task force or to provide assistance, if needed.

Question: Can a graduate FEM require a DPD verification statement?

ACEND Response: FG programs set their admission requirements and can require a DPD verification if they so choose.

Question: Which institutions have a graduate FEM with a DPD verification statement required?

ACEND Response: Accredited FG programs can be found here:

<https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/accredited-programs/future-education-model-graduate-program>

Penn State offers a track for those students who have a DPD verification statement. The University of Pittsburgh has an option for students who have the DPD verification statement. Rutgers' admission requirements include the DPD verification statement or transcripts demonstrating completion of all prerequisites. While DPD verification is not specified as a requirement by the other FG programs, DPD and FB graduates are likely good candidates for all FG programs. For more information, applicants are encouraged to check with the FG programs individually.

Question: The FEM graduate programs can dictate prerequisites for applying? There is not a requirement for a FEM BS program verification?

ACEND Response: The *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards* specify the competencies a student must demonstrate to complete the program, but programs determine the admission requirements to enter the program. Each of the FEM degree programs is intended to stand alone. ACEND did not set prerequisite requirements for any of the degree programs. Rather, individual programs would set their own admission requirements. A future education model master's degree program (FG) could for example, choose to require verification of completion of a DPD, FB, either DPD or FB, or any bachelor's degree as a prerequisite; in addition, an FG program could require specific courses or supervised experiences as prerequisites or could choose not to require any prerequisites.

Curriculum and Terminology

Question: One of the responsibilities listed for the RDN with a graduate degree stated, "prescribe pharmacotherapy". Please explain/clarify that since "prescribing medications for treatment of medical conditions" is not in our scope of practice.

ACEND Response: The competencies in the FEM are not based on current practice, but on future practice, specifically what a graduate will need to know how to do in the future. This information was based on the environmental scan that ACEND conducted with employers of RDNs. ACEND views this competency as the future practice of the RDN being able to recommend and prescribe the use of medications to help treat nutrition-related issues. This might include, for example, prescribing insulin for

individuals with diabetes or prescribing prokinetic agents, anti-nausea medications, anti-diarrhea medications, and/or motility medications for patients on enteral feedings.

Question: Are the FEM graduate program competencies finalized?

ACEND Response: The FEM competencies for all program types (FG, FB and FA) have been finalized and are included in the FEM Accreditation Standards found at www.eatrightpro.org/FutureModel.

Question: Will the graduate FEM program require an internship?

ACEND Response: Completion of supervised practice either before or after completion of the graduate degree is not part of the recommended future model of education in nutrition and dietetics. ACEND intends that the experience components will be **integrated** with the graduate degree coursework to prepare students to demonstrate the competencies required of entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists. Although the coursework and experience will be integrated, there are likely to be many models of how such integration might occur. For instance, programs may use alternate experiences in their didactic courses; have students concurrently take coursework and complete hours at an experiential learning site; have students complete a didactic segment (1 month or 1 semester) followed by an experiential learning rotation (1 week, 1 month or 1 semester) repeated several times during a program; or any combinations of these examples. ACEND encourages innovation in how this experiential learning and its integration are done.

Following is ACEND's definition of integrated experiential learning in nutrition and dietetics:

Integrated experiential learning in nutrition and dietetics is a curriculum design model whereby didactic coursework is combined with experiential learning in real-world and simulated settings. The curriculum is designed so that the learning that takes place within the classroom is then applied in a setting that is overseen by a preceptor. The key element in experiential learning is that the entire didactic learning does not come first within the program, followed entirely by experiential learning, but that both components are woven together throughout the educational program. For example, during an introduction to a community nutrition course, students might learn about low literacy in the classroom (didactic) followed by developing a low literacy brochure as a course assignment (experiential learning) and later evaluating the effectiveness of the brochure in a community setting such as the local food pantry (experiential learning).

Future Education Model Program Completion and Graduation

Question: If a student completes a FEM Bachelor's degree program and becomes an NDTR, how can they become an RDN?

ACEND Response: Graduates of bachelor's degree programs (FB) accredited under the *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards* will be eligible to take the credentialing exam to become an NDTR but will not be eligible to take the credentialing exam to become an RDN. They will, however, be able to apply for future education model graduate degree programs (FG) to become an RDN. Currently ACEND has several FG programs that accept graduates of FB programs.

Question: We can still seek accreditation for a new DPD bachelor's degree in nutrition (without the internship component)? In other words, students would get the BS degree and still need to do the hours and get a master's degree?

ACEND Response: In June 2009, the ACEND board instituted a moratorium on new Didactic Programs in Dietetics applying for candidacy for accreditation, unless they have a process to assure that all qualified students will obtain an internship position. The board has not recently accredited any new DPD programs.

To meet the 2024 CDR mandate, students who earn a BS degree and DPD verification statement without the supervised practice component could apply to a dietetic internship and complete a graduate degree, or they can directly apply to a FEM FG program and earn a graduate degree that incorporates both the supervised experiential learning with didactic components to ensure that competencies are met.

Future Education Model Program Impact

Question: Can you clarify what is happening with current bachelor's degrees? Will you accredit stand-alone bachelor's degrees moving forward without an experiential component?

ACEND Response: The ACEND board has not lifted the moratorium on DPD programs. Under the 2017 Standards and, moving forward, the 2022 Standards, a student in a DPD program must earn a bachelor's degree and complete program requirements in order to receive a DPD verification statement and continue to a supervised practice program. Under the FEM Standards, a student in a Future Bachelor's (FB) program who earns a bachelor's degree and completes program requirements receives a FB verification statement and is eligible to write the NDTR credentialing exam. Both of these students may be able to apply to a Future Graduate (FG) program, depending on the requirements of that FG. Some FG programs accept any student with a bachelor's degree while other FGs require the DPD verification statement for admission into the program.

Question: You mentioned many reasons why the FEM is "better" than the 2017 Standards. Why continue the 2017 Standards if this is the case? Also, isn't it going to be confusing to prospective students to have two types of standards (2017 and FEM)? FEM sounds more progressive and may result in fewer students applying for programs that still follow the 2017 Standards.

ACEND Response: The ACEND board has made the commitment to educators to evaluate the new FEM Standards to ensure that FEM Standards will be similar or better than the 2017 Standards before full adoption. The goal will be to eventually have one set of standards at each degree level, but this may take time, possibly another decade or more.

Question: Is there a need for more DTR programs? Are the majority of active DTR programs struggling with enrollment or actively enrolling students?

ACEND Response: As of July 12, 2019, ACEND accredits 35 Dietetic Technician programs. While not all DTR programs are struggling with enrollment, the number of programs has declined over the past five years due to decrease in demand: May 2018 - 36; May 2017 - 39; May 2016 - 42 and August 2015 - 42.

The board continues to address the issue of the decrease in the number of DT programs and explore ways to support existing programs.

Question: There seems to be little talk, in any FEM discussion about the impact on stand-alone Dietetic Internships. Is there any discussion happening within ACEND specific to stand-alone DIs and how they might be (or whether they should be) preserved moving forward?

ACEND Response: ACEND is continuing to accredit DI programs under the 2017 Accreditation Standards and has made no decision to discontinue accreditation of DI programs. ACEND values the stand-alone DIs and their contributions to the preparation of RDNs. The *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards* include expectations that didactic and experiential learning are integrated in a single program; however, the FEM Standards allow for partnerships to be formed among different institutions. Stand-alone DIs will be able to form such partnerships with educational institutions of their choosing to deliver a Future Graduate (FG) program.

Demonstration Program Application

Question: In which geographic area are you in need of demonstration projects for the graduate future model?

ACEND Response: Currently we have received applications from all regions in the U.S. We continue to welcome applications from all regions.

Question: If our program attends the FEM program director workshop in August, would any of the fees be waived?

ACEND Response: ACEND covers fees for the competency-based education trainings for those programs that have been approved by the board to move forward as demonstration programs. The fees for the FEM program director workshops are not covered by ACEND.

Question: To develop a graduate program requires state approval; can we propose a program knowing that we have yet to get state approval?

ACEND Response: Demonstration programs have several years to obtain the needed approvals from their regulatory bodies. Programs in cohort 3 must enroll students no later than fall 2025, and cohort 4 programs will have a start date of no later than fall 2026.

Question: Can a university continue to have an undergraduate DPD program (2017 Standards) and a graduate FEM program?

ACEND Response: A university is able to continue to have an undergraduate DPD program and concurrently a graduate FEM program (FG).

Question: If we are applying to be a demonstration program and plan to phase out the current 2017 program, can the program director direct both programs during the phase-out period?

ACEND Response: Programs reorganizing into an FEM demonstration program and phasing out the current program may have the same program director managing the new FEM program and the program being phased out. If this is the case, plans for ensuring that the program director will meet all the ACEND FEM program director requirements at the time the existing program is phased out, including directing only one accredited program, should be explained in the eligibility application.

Question: If we have specific questions regarding the FEM application itself, where should we direct our questions?

ACEND Response: The ACEND website, www.eatrightpro.org/FutureModel, includes a webinar recording of helpful tips for completing the application and a guidance document detailing information to include in the application narrative. ACEND staff (acend@eatright.org; 800-877-1600 x5400) are available to answer questions and assist programs throughout the application process.

Credentialing (CDR's 2024 Graduate Degree Requirement)

Question: With the new education changes, will the current credentialed professionals be grandfathered into the new credentialing guidelines?

ACEND Response: The current credentialed registered dietitians will be grandfathered into the new 2024 credentialing guidelines set by CDR. ACEND is conducting a collaborative forum with CDR and CPLS (Consumer Protection and Licensure Subcommittee) at FNCE 2019 in Philadelphia, PA to clarify the incoming changes with the new CDR mandate. Everyone is encouraged to attend this forum. The forum will take place on Sunday, October 27, 1:30pm – 3:00pm.

Question: Is there some guidance on what kind of MS or MA is needed to take the RD exam starting in 2024?

ACEND Response: After January 1, 2024, just as the baccalaureate degree may currently be in any area, the graduate degree may also be in any area, provided it is granted by a U.S. regionally accredited college/university, or foreign equivalent. The *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards* for Graduate Degree Programs (FG) do not specify the title of the degree (MS, MA, MBA, MPH, PhD, DCN, etc.) or the focus area of the degree (nutrition, dietetics, public health, culinary, etc.). Programs determine the title and focus of the graduate degree program they are offering. ACEND does not expect to change to requiring a specific degree title or focus, but will monitor and ensure that the curriculum meets the competencies and performance indicators outlined in its standards. ACEND will continue to focus on the competencies required of graduates that are detailed in the FG Standards.