

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR 2ND COHORT OF DEMONSTRATION PROGRAMS

ACEND has issued a second call for demonstration programs to be accredited under the future education model. The application materials are posted on the ACEND website: www.eatrightpro.org/FutureModel. Applications are due by 11 am CT on April 16, 2018. A new webinar about the demonstration application process has been added to the website: www.eatrightpro.org/FutureModel

Comparison of the 2017 and Future Education Model Accreditation Standards

ACEND currently has nine sets of Accreditation Standards. The *2017 Accreditation Standards* include standards for six program types: Nutrition and Dietetics Didactic Programs (DPD), Internship Programs (DI), Coordinated Programs (CP), Technician Programs (DT) and Foreign (FDE) and International (IDE) Dietitian Education Programs. These standards are a revision of the *2012 Accreditation Standards* and can be found at www.eatrightpro.org/2017Standards. ACEND also has released the *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards* for Associate (FA), Bachelor's (FB) and Graduate (FG) programs. These standards are only available for adoption by demonstration programs.

The *2017 Accreditation Standards* do not require a master's degree for any programs preparing students to become Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDN) and do not require a bachelor's degree for programs preparing Nutrition and Dietetics Technicians, Registered (NDTR).

The *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards* elevate the competence expected of and the education level required to prepare RDNs and NDTRs. They launch the preparation of a new practitioner for the marketplace, a Nutrition Health Associate. These standards do require a minimum of a master's degree for preparation of RDNs and a minimum of a bachelor's degree for the preparation of NDTRs. The *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards* emphasize competency-based education with integrated didactic and experiential learning throughout the curriculum in a single program; a practice common in other health professions but not the predominant model currently used under the *2017 Accreditation Standards* for preparing RDNs.

The *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards* provide much greater detail about the competence expected of program graduates and the performance indicators used to help demonstrate attainment of the competencies. Formative and summative evaluation is expected throughout the program and is documented in the program's competency assessment plan. The assessment process moves from a checklist of tasks completed by the student to an assessment of the competence demonstrated by the student. Program directors, faculty and preceptors must plan for continuous and frequent feedback to students, provide opportunities for students to deliberately practice and demonstrate the competencies and couple assessment and effective feedback with ongoing guidance and coaching.

ACEND will provide training on competency-based education and competency assessment for the directors of future education model demonstration programs. These program directors will work with ACEND to develop materials and rubrics for implementing these new standards.

CHANGE IN TIME AND DATE OF VIRTUAL TOWN HALL MEETINGS

ACEND periodically changes the day and time of the monthly virtual town halls to accommodate different teaching schedules of its stakeholders. Starting on January 17, 2018, the virtual town halls will be held on the **3rd Wednesday of the month at 3:00 pm CT**. Information on joining the town halls is posted on the ACEND website: www.eatrightpro.org/FutureModel. Note: the December, 2017 town hall will continue on the 2nd Thursday at 1:00 pm CT and will be held on December 14.

For Additional Information

- Review back issues of the monthly ACEND Standards Updates that are posted on the ACEND website www.eatrightpro.org/FutureModel.
- Participate in a monthly ACEND virtual town hall on the 2nd 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.
- 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 to help categorize the responses.

FNCE® 2017 ACEND Forum

Question: *Is it possible to see the slides from the ACEND Forum presentation at FNCE® 2017?*

ACEND Response: The ACEND® Forum presentation at FNCE® 2017 provided an update on ACEND's Standards work and the Future Education Model. Also discussed were the topics of competency-based education and competency assessment. A recording of the session and a copy of the slides can be viewed at www.eatrightpro.org/FutureModel.

2017 Accreditation Standards Questions

Question: *ACEND is requiring programs to submit a curriculum map and student learning outcomes assessment plan to demonstrate compliance with the 2017 Accreditation Standards. What will ACEND do with the materials submitted? Will programs get feedback on their documents?*

ACEND Response: To help assure that students are being prepared with the knowledge and competencies added in the 2017 Accreditation Standards, the ACEND Board indicated in August, 2016, when the 2017 Accreditation Standards were released, that all programs would need to demonstrate by January 3, 2018 that they had come into compliance with the 2017 Accreditation Standards. Programs will demonstrate compliance by submitting documents showing they had incorporated the new knowledge and competencies into their curriculum and student learning outcomes (SLO) assessment plans (see <http://www.eatrightpro.org/resource/acend/accreditation-standards-fees-and-policies/2017-standards/notification-of-materials-due> for more detailed information). A late fee of \$150 will be assessed to programs whose materials are not received by January 3, 2018. The ACEND Board's process for review of these documents is to have ACEND staff check that each program submitted their documents and send confirmation of receipt of the materials to the program. These documents will be stored in the program's file. Staff then will pull a random sample of 25% of the plans submitted to review for inclusion of the newly added knowledge and competency statements. Based on results of that review, the ACEND Board will determine whether additional review of program materials is needed. A thorough review of the quality of the program's curriculum map and SLO plan will occur during the program's next accreditation review (PAR or self-study). Programs that would like a quality review of the submitted materials before their accreditation review, can request such a review by emailing ACEND@eatright.org. ACEND will have the documents reviewed by ACEND Program Reviewers and will provide feedback to the program. Note: Programs that have already submitted these documents to ACEND in a report based on the 2017 Standards (self-study, PAR, progress report) do not need to resubmit them. If you have any questions about what materials need to be submitted and/or whether you need to submit the materials, please contact your ACEND program manager or ACEND (acend@eatright.org; 800-877-1600 x5400).

Question: Can you provide some examples of projects programs might use to have students demonstrate KRDN 4.6?

ACEND Response: KRDN 4.6 states that upon completion of the program, students must be able to “Analyze data for assessment and evaluate data to be used in decision-making for continuous quality improvement”. This knowledge requirement focuses on being able to analyze/evaluate data to make decisions to help continually improve the quality of a program/organization. To demonstrate achievement of KRDN 4.6, students could complete activities that involve evaluation of either actual or simulated data. For example, program directors might provide students with program evaluation or student learning outcomes data and have them analyze/evaluate the data and make suggestions for program strengths and improvements. Or program directors could get data from practitioners in the area for one or more of their recent quality improvement projects and have students analyze and suggest decisions to make based on those data.

Future Education Model Accreditation Standards Questions

Question: Do you anticipate the Future Education Model Accreditation Standards will become the 2022 Accreditation Standards?

ACEND Response: The ACEND Board has indicated that they will evaluate outcome data from the demonstration programs accredited under the *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards* before making a decision on the implementation of those standards for all programs. Because it will take time for the demonstration programs to begin admitting students and those students to graduate and be employed, the ACEND Board does not believe there will be sufficient data to make a decision prior to the timeline mandated by the US Department of Education for the review/revision of the *2017 Accreditation Standards*. Thus the *2022 Accreditation Standards* are expected to be a revised version of the *2017 Accreditation Standards*.

Question: Do faculty and those overseeing the experiential learning in the future education model bachelor's degree program need to be an RDN or NDTR?

ACEND Response: The *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards for Bachelor's Degree Programs* do not specify that faculty need be RDNs or NDTRs, the standards say that faculty and preceptors must be “qualified, appropriately credentialed and have sufficient education” but leave the decision to the program to determine what education and credentialing is needed to teach a course or preceptor experiential learning. The bachelor's degree program would need to ensure that the faculty and preceptors are qualified and have the necessary credentials to guide students in developing the competencies identified in the standards that will be needed to practice as future NDTRs.

Demonstration Program Questions

Question: When can a demonstration program begin recruiting and admitting students and will those students be graduating from an accredited program?

ACEND Response: The process to become a demonstration program includes multiple phases. The programs chosen as demonstration programs will follow ACEND's current policies for earning or continuing their accreditation; those identified as a reorganization of an existing program follow ACEND's substantive change procedures for reorganization of an existing program and those identified as a candidacy follow ACEND's candidacy procedures. The first phase of the demonstration program selection process involves the review of the application demonstrating the proposed program's compliance with Standards 1, 2, and 6. This application is reviewed by a review team, the ACEND Standards Committee and ACEND Board and a decision is made by the ACEND Board on whether the program can move forward in the process to becoming a demonstration program and the categorization of the program as a reorganization or candidacy. Program directors then attend mandatory on-line and in person training. After the training, those categorized as reorganization submit a report detailing their compliance with Standards 4, 5, 8 and 9. When this report is approved by the ACEND Board, the program's accreditation continues as a reorganized program and the program can begin to admit students. Programs categorized as a reorganization will complete a self-study and have a site visit typically within four years. Those identified as candidacy programs will follow ACEND's candidacy procedures. They will complete a self-study and have a site visit. Once they are granted candidacy accreditation by the ACEND Board, they can begin to admit students. All demonstration programs will be accredited under the *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards* and graduates of those programs will be considered graduates of ACEND-accredited programs.

Question: What research data will be collected from the demonstration programs and when will the demonstration programs learn what data they will be collecting?

ACEND Response: ACEND released the Demonstration Program Research Logic Model with the November 2017 Standards Update. It can be viewed on the ACEND website: www.eatrightpro.org/FutureModel. The logic model provides the research framework that will be used to evaluate the demonstration program outcomes. Programs chosen as demonstration programs will receive information on the data collection process as part of the training provided to the programs.

Question: Will the same research data be collected from control programs?

ACEND Response: The same research data on program and graduate outcomes will be collected from the demonstration programs and control programs accredited under the *2017 Accreditation Standards*.

Question: Who approves the research logic model proposed by ACEND?

ACEND Response: The ACEND Board makes all decisions related to the work of ACEND. The ACEND Board approved distribution of the logic model for comments and will make a decision on the final model based on comments received. Comments on the proposed logic model can be sent to FutureModel@eatright.org.

Question: Can the program director of a currently ACEND-accredited program (DPD, DI, CP, DT) also direct a future education model program?

ACEND Response: Both the *2017 Accreditation Standards* and the *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards* indicate that a program director can only direct one ACEND-accredited program. If an existing ACEND-accredited program is being reorganized into a demonstration program, the director for both programs could be the same if it is one program reorganizing into another program with the initial program not existing after the reorganization. If the demonstration program is a new program and existing ACEND-accredited programs are continuing then there would need to be different directors for each accredited program.

Credentialing Questions

Question: Does the master's degree, required by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) to be eligible to take the credentialing exam to become a registered dietitian, need to be accredited by ACEND?

ACEND Response: The CDR website, www.cdrnet.org provides the details about the change in eligibility requirements that take effect January 1, 2024. As stated on the website, the master's degree does not need to be ACEND-accredited; applicants would, however, need to have completed an ACEND-accredited nutrition and dietetics program(s). A master's degree earned as part of an ACEND-accredited program would meet this requirement as well.

Question: When a DI is combined with an MS or MPH, does CDR verify degree completion with an official transcript in addition to the DI Verification Statement?

ACEND Response: CDR uses the Verification Statement to verify completion of an ACEND-accredited program and uses the official transcript to verify the degree that was granted. Both documents are used even when a DI program requires that the graduate degree be completed to award the verification statement.