

Facilitating a Path Forward: Evaluation of the Future Education Model Graduate Program

Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition
and Dietetics (ACEND®) FNCE Forum

Session Presenters



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Studies
Northern Illinois University

Disclosures

- Jennifer Tomesko. DCN, RD, CNSC
 - Program Director of a Graduate Program in Nutrition and Dietetics (GP)
- Long Wang, PhD, RDN, FAND
 - Program Director of a Graduate Program in Nutrition and Dietetics (GP)



Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this presentation, attendees will be able to:

1. Evaluate graduates in competency-based Future Education Model nutrition and dietetics education programs.
2. Differentiate between the competency-based Future Education Model nutrition and dietetics education programs and other ACEND-accredited programs.
3. Justify the value of competency-based education to the preparation of future dietetics practitioners.

Updates from **ACEND®**

ACEND®

**Accreditation Council
for Education in
Nutrition and Dietetics**
the accrediting agency for the
Academy of Nutrition
and Dietetics



Mission:

- Ensure the quality of nutrition and dietetics education to advance the practice of the profession

Responsibilities:

- Set national standards for education accreditation
- Evaluate education programs

Recognition/Accreditation

- US Department of Education
- Functions autonomously



ACEND® Board 2024-2025

ACEND Board

Chairs:

- Nancy Prange, IL (Chair)
- Long Wang, CA (Past)
- Janet Stuhrecke, CT (Vice)

Practitioner Representatives:

- Gloria Verdino, NY
- Angie Soltysiak, MO

Public Members:

- Anthony Hill, SC
- Nicole Web, MO
- Kerry McNiven, NH

Student Members:

- Trenton Voss, TX
- Kaitlyn Good, VA (elect)

Program Representatives:

- Dena French, MO (elect)-CP
- Kimberly Gottesman, CA -Rep-at-Large
- Le Greta Hudson, MO (elect) -Rep-at-Large
- Deborah Hutcheon, SC (elect)-DPD
- Kendra Kattelman, SD -DPD
- Kelli Killingsworth, PR -Rep-at-Large
- Ellis Morrow, TX –DPD
- Michelle Palumbo, OH - DT
- Claudia Sealey-Potts, TX (elect)-DI
- Jennifer Tomesko, NJ -Rep-at-Large
- Crystal Wynn, VA –DI (& administrator)

Administrator:

- Crystal Wynn, VA -DI

Recruiting ACEND Board Members

- ACEND Nominating Committee is seeking nominations for Board positions:
 - Dietetic Technician Program Representative
 - Program Representative-at-large
 - Student Representative
- Qualifications and nomination process on ACEND website www.eatrightpro.org/acend
- Nominations due November 1, 2024

Recruiting ACEND Program Reviewers

Great Opportunity!

- Networking
- Benefit to learn from others
- Learn standards

Responsibilities:

- Self studies/site visits (2/year)
- Program reports (2-4/year)

Application on ACEND website

www.eatright.org/acend

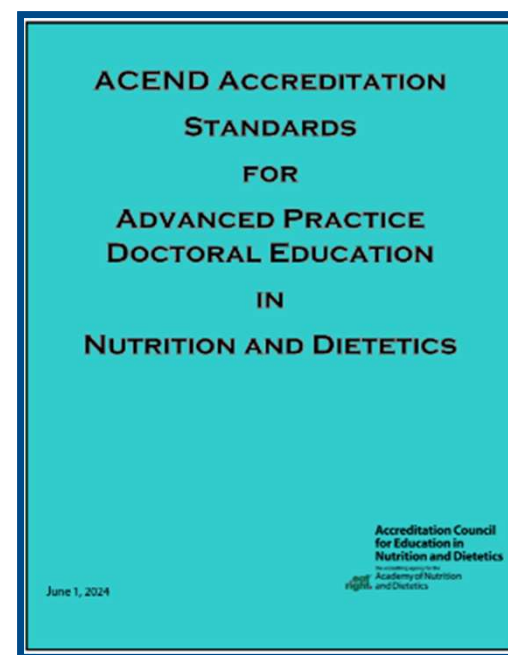


ACEND Accredited Programs – As of July 2024

TOTAL ACEND Accredited Programs	623
Dietetic Technician Programs (DT)	19
Coordinated Programs (CP)	52
Didactic Programs (DPD)	208
Dietetic Internships (DI)	250
Future Graduate Programs (GP)	87
International Programs (ICP & FDE)	7

ACEND Advanced Practice Doctorate Level Standards (APD)

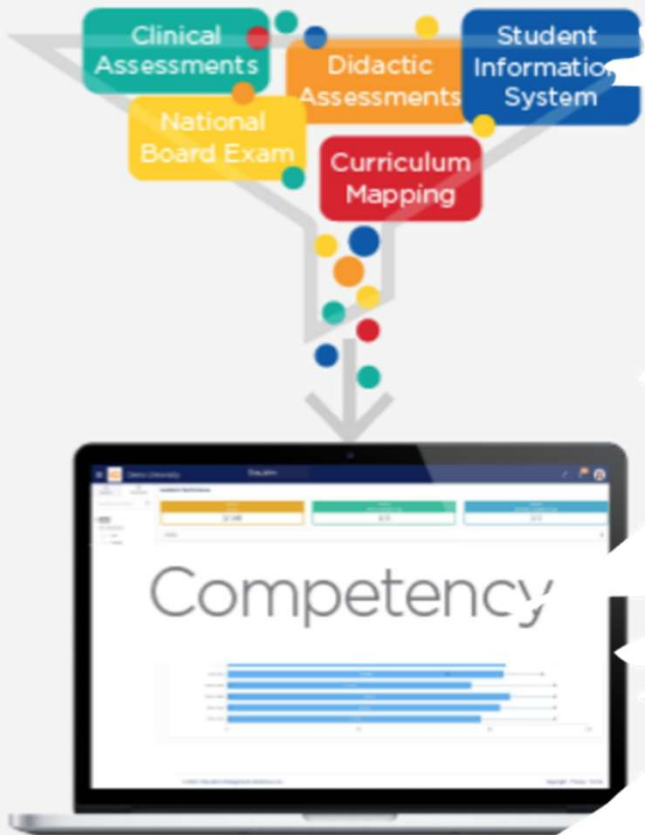
- Released June 1, 2024
- Optional standards and degree level
- For the RDN with minimum 3 years of professional experience
- Not entry-level
- Professional doctorate and not PhD
- Accessed at www.eatrightpro.org/ACEND



Competency Management Software for ACEND Programs Is Live!

- Optional for ACEND Programs
- No additional cost
- Launched May 2024
- Weekly webinars and Q&As, Tuesdays
- Competency questions? Contact Education@eatight.org

Resource Guides &
Video Tutorials located under
Program Directors page



New Dietetics Application Process for Supervised Programs (DIs, CPs, GPs)

- January 2023 NDEP Council voted to recommend to the ACEND Board to discontinue the match through D&D Digital
- May 2023 Dietetics Application Task Force established by the ACEND Board
- January 2024 Task Force recommended a new **student-centered** process used by many other health professions
 - ACEND Board voted to discontinue the match starting Fall 2024
 - All supervised practice programs to follow the notification date, the decision date and last application acceptance date

Pilot 2024-2025: Dietetics Application Process for Supervised Programs (DIs, CPs, GPs)

Fall

November 1: Applicant notification

November 15: Should not require decision before this date

December 15: Should not accept applications after this date

Spring

March 1: Applicant notification

March 15: Should not require decision before this date

July 15: Should not accept applications after this date

Communication with ACEND

ACEND Update

- Periodic update from ACEND posted on the website

Virtual Town Hall

- Next town hall: Tuesday, November 19 at 11:00 am – 12:00 noon Central Time.
- Directions for joining on the ACEND website

ACEND Staff

- 800-877-1600 x5400
- acend@eatright.org

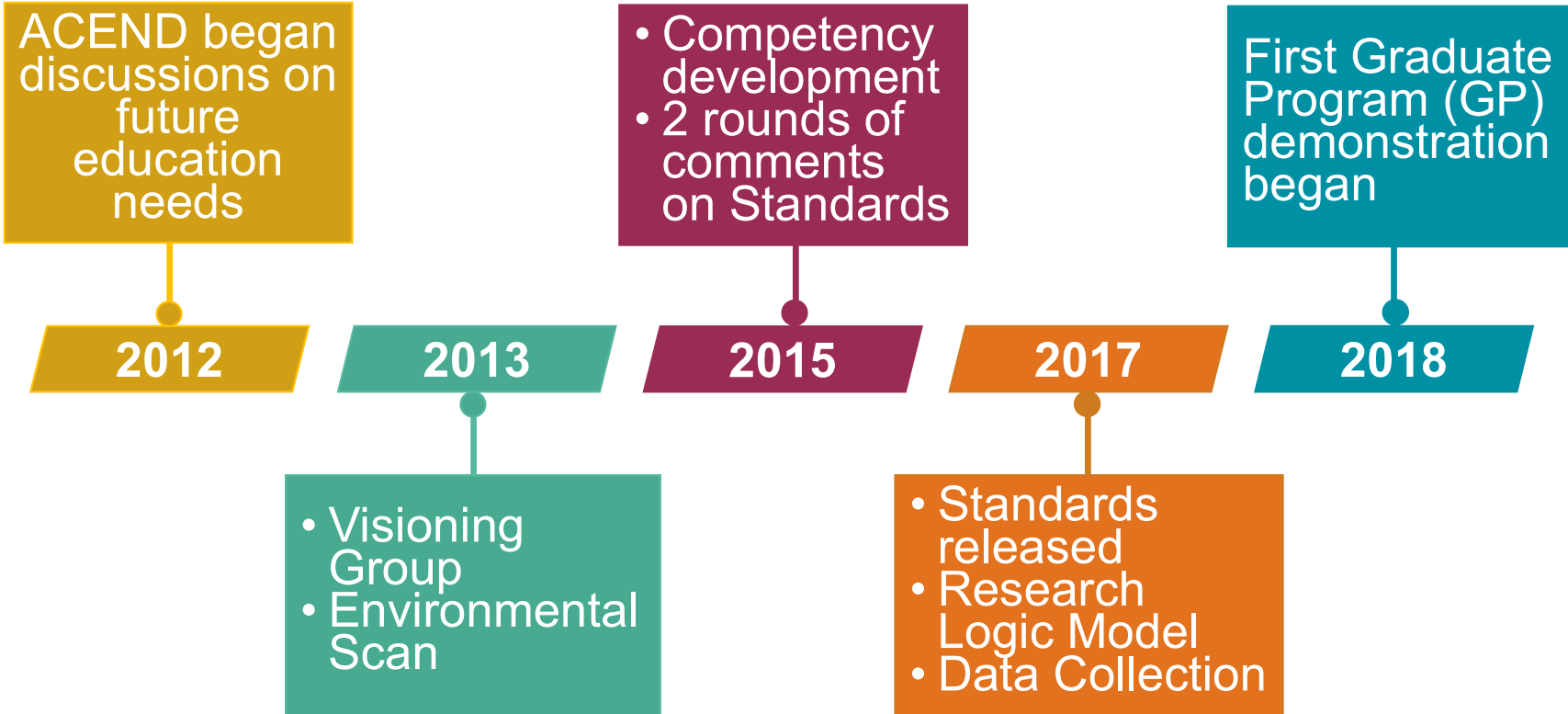


Future Education Model (FEM) Demonstration Background

FEM Demonstration – Phased Project Timeline

Phase 1 – Development 2012-2017

Phase 2 – Assessment 2017-present



FEM Assessment - Research Logic Model

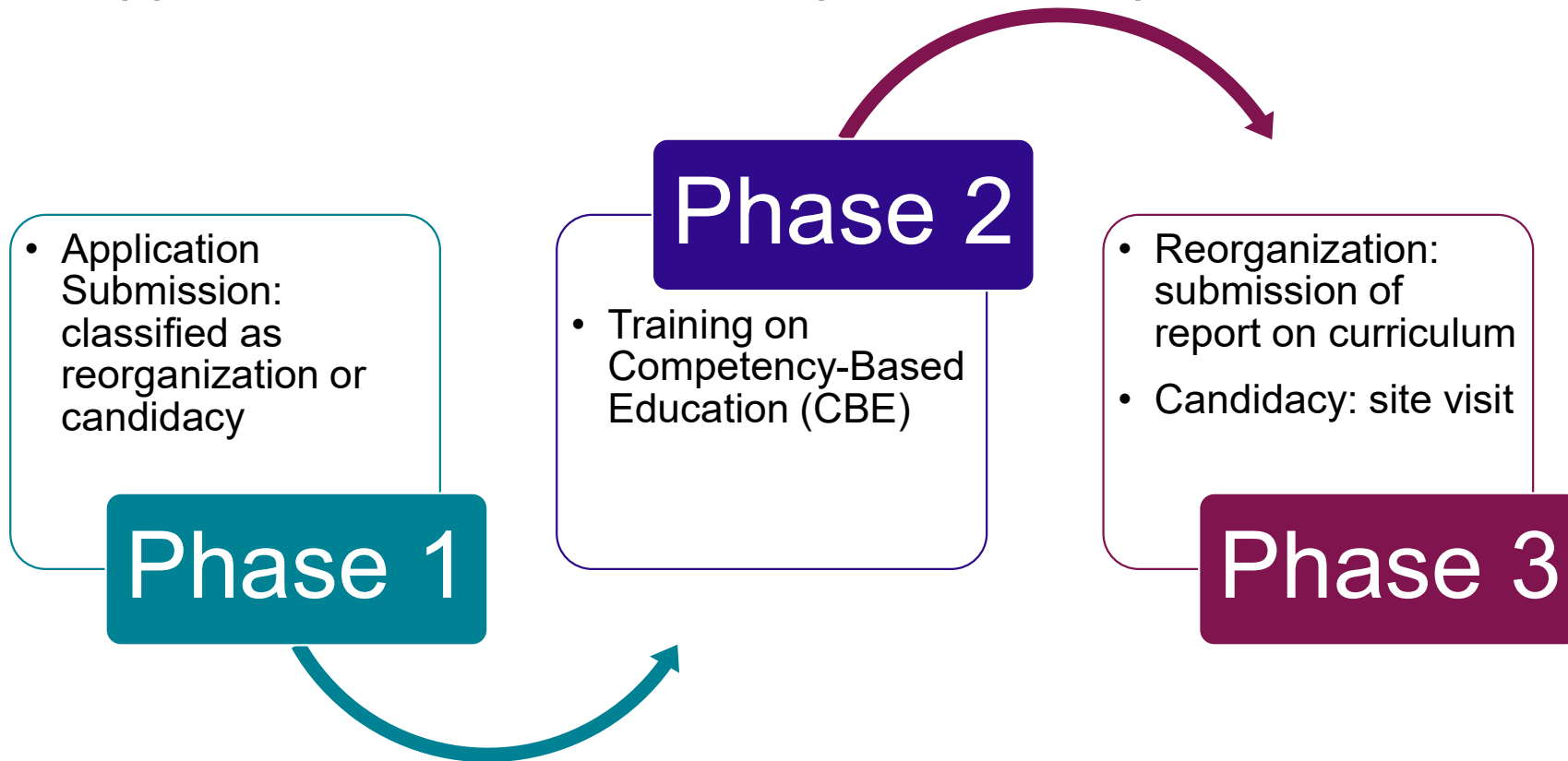
- **Purpose:** To show relationships among the objectives, planned activities and desired outcomes of the demonstration program project.
- **Methodology:** The project was divided into three broad groups:
 1. Demonstration program selection
 2. Demonstration program engagement, data collection and analysis
 3. Multiple methods used to gather data for objectives in the pilot



Demonstration Program Selection & Program Engagement Methodology & Results

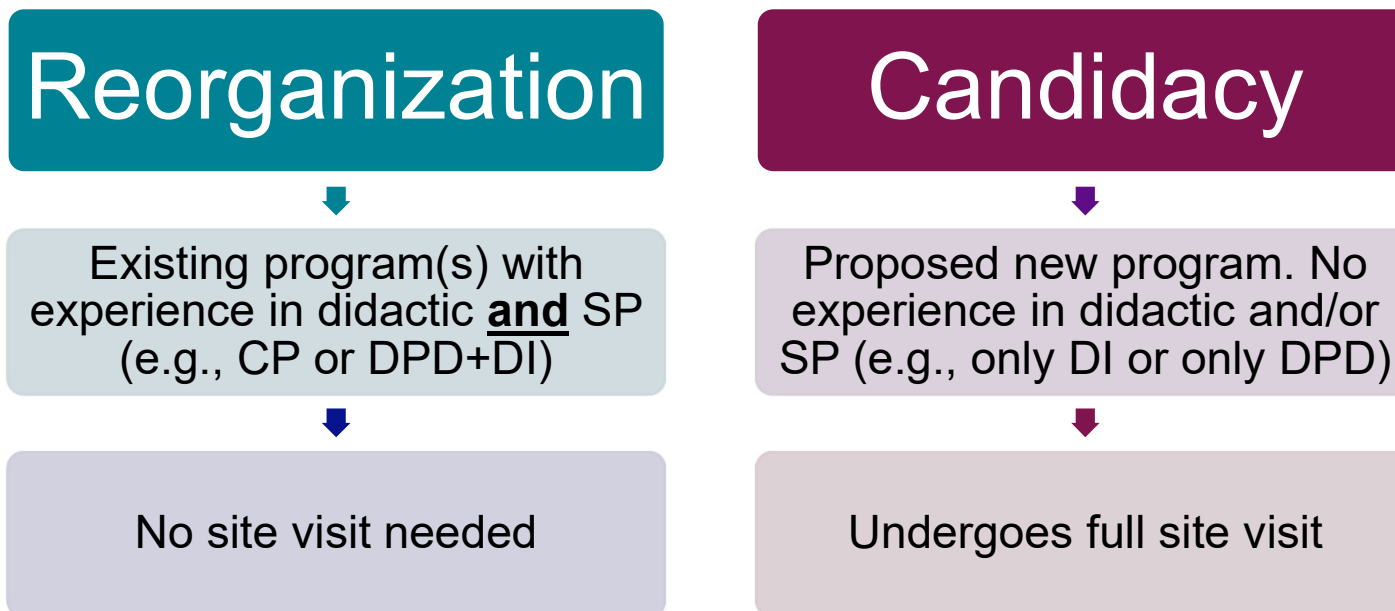
Methodology

- Application to demonstration pilot is multi-phased



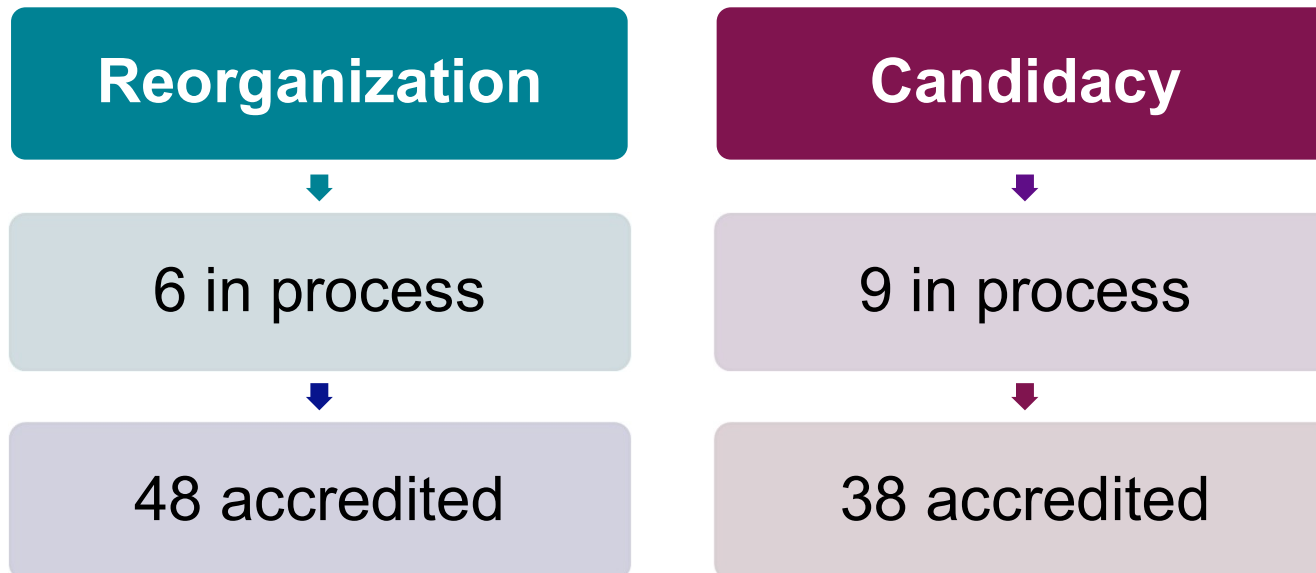
Methodology

- Demonstration Graduate Programs (GP) under the FEM Standards classified as a reorganization or as a candidacy

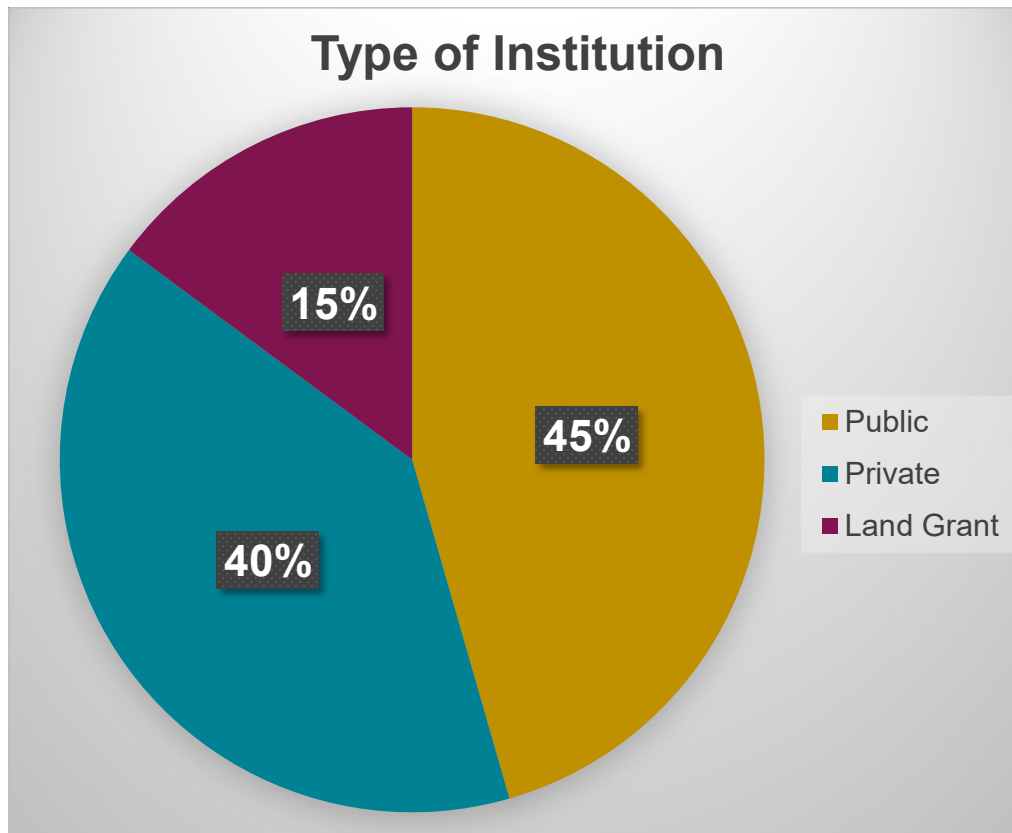


Accredited Graduate Programs– as of July 2024

- 86 accredited Graduate Programs (GPs) under the FEM Standards
- 15 in process

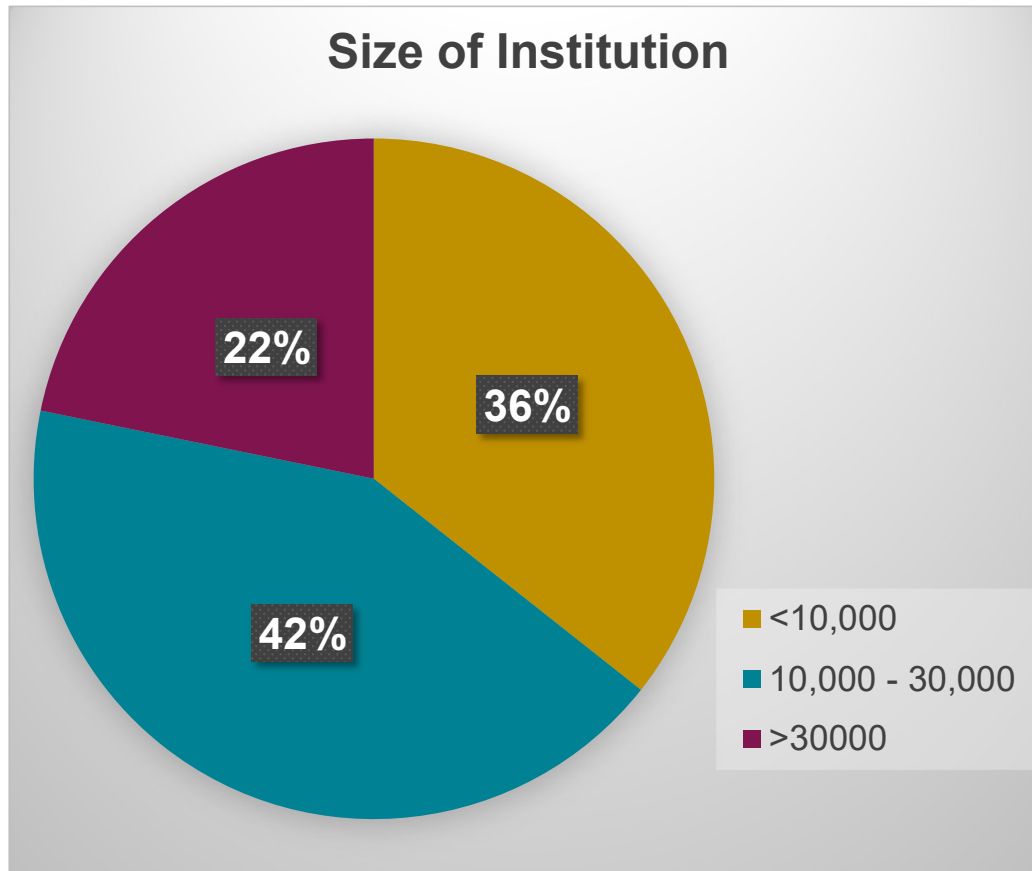


Characteristics of GP Institutions – As of July 2024



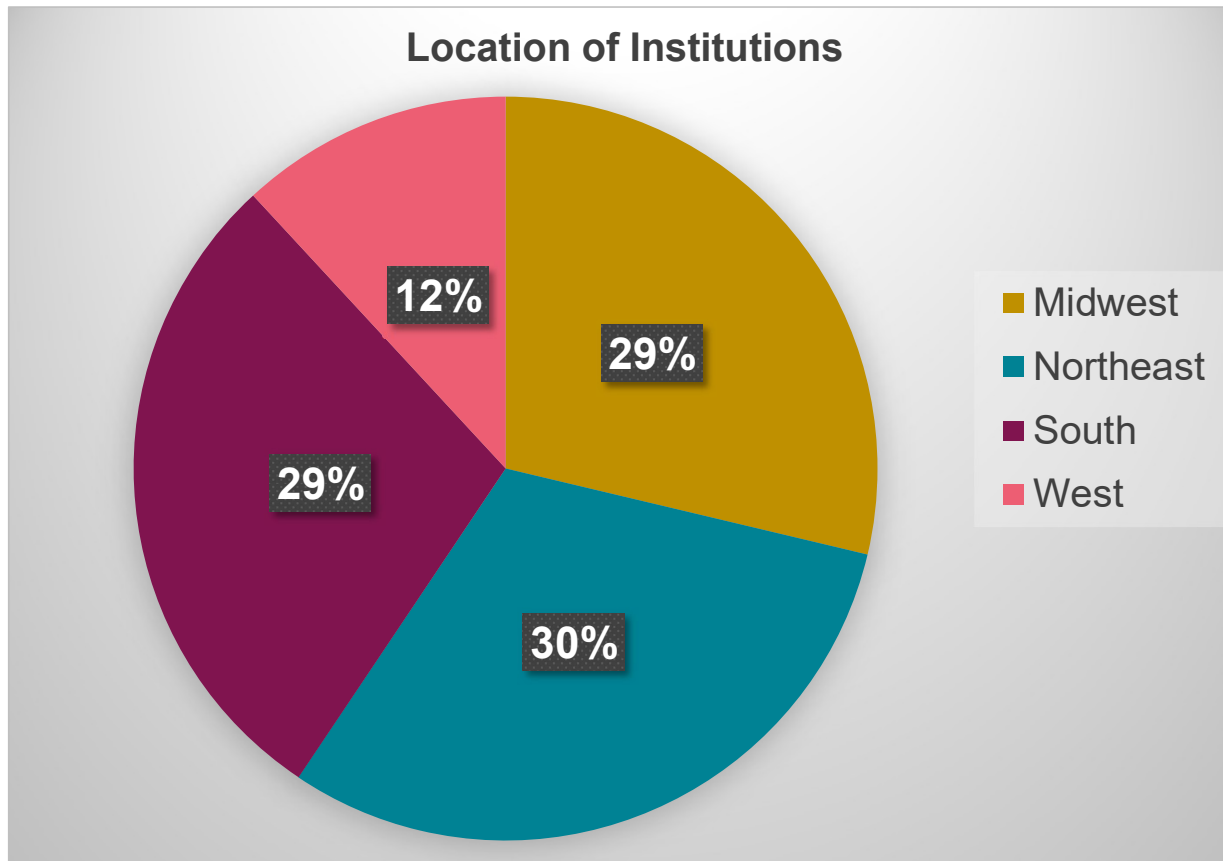
- The same proportion of public and private institutions house a GP program.
- 15% are from land grant universities.

Characteristics of GP Institutions – As of July 2024

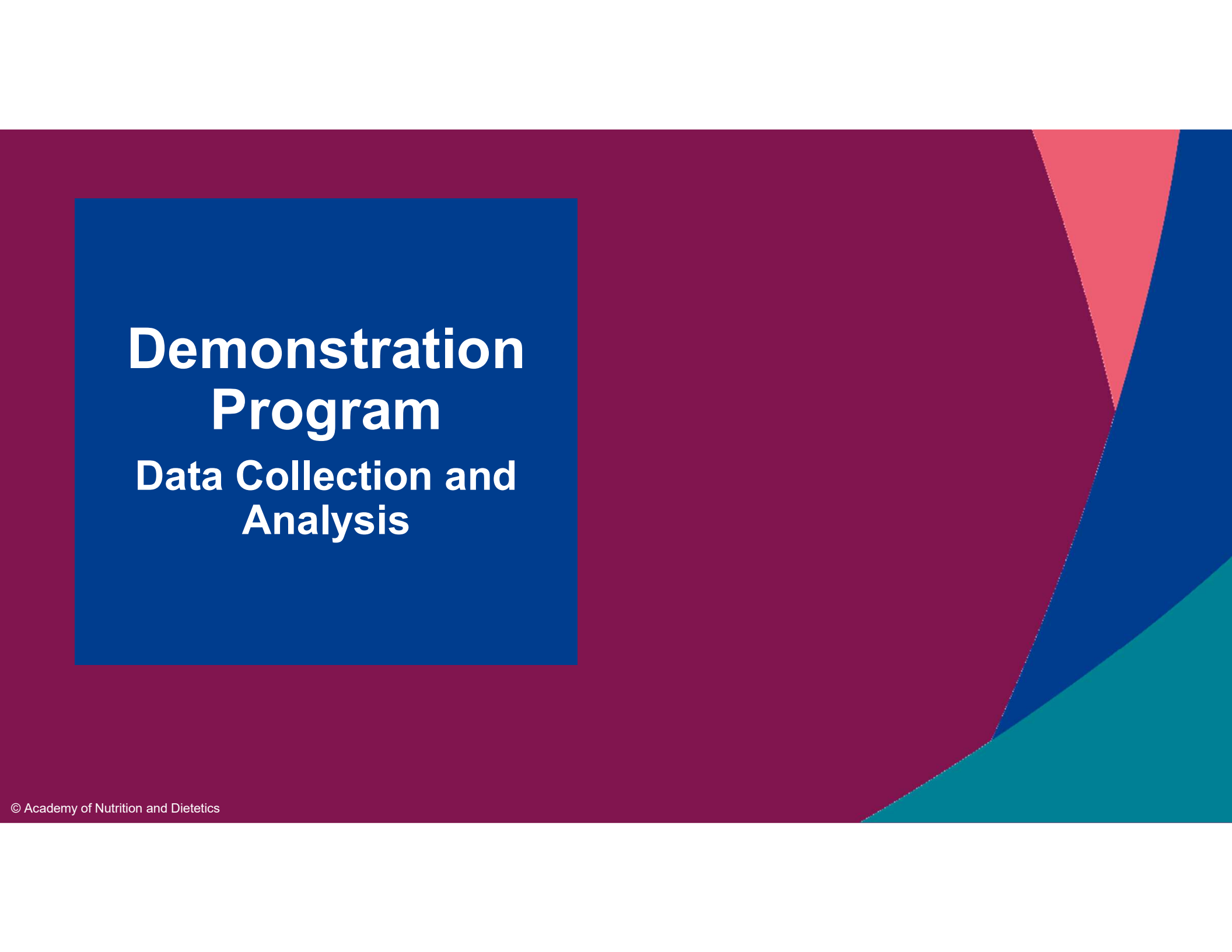


- One third of GPs are housed in smaller colleges or universities with less than 10,000 students.
- Overall good representation of schools of all sizes.

Characteristics of GP Institutions – As of July 2024



- Good distribution of programs across the US



Demonstration Program

Data Collection and Analysis

Data Collection – Purpose of Surveys

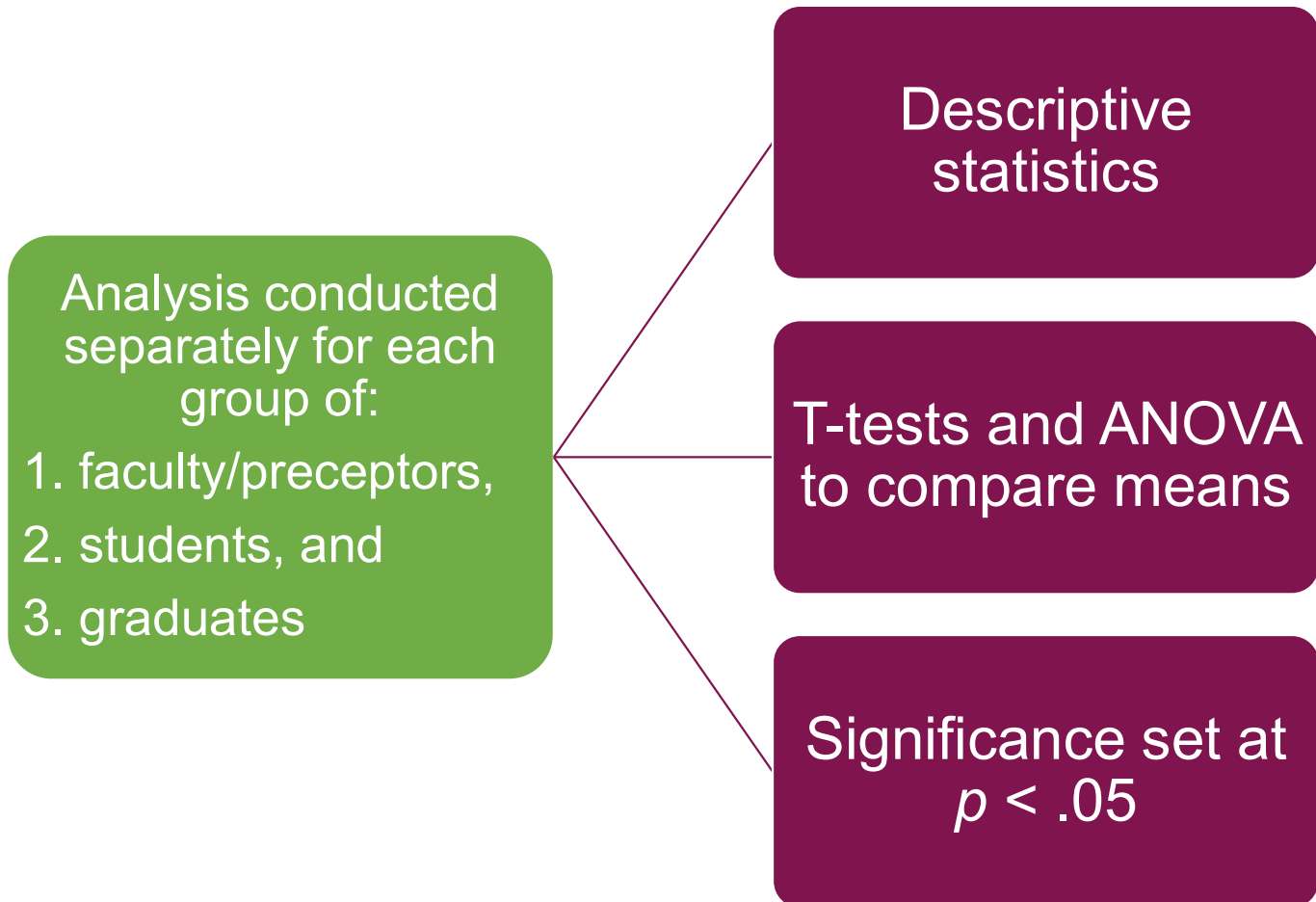
Faculty, Preceptors and Program Directors	Students	
<p>Purpose to identify:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. perceived understanding of CBE2. satisfaction with CBE training3. use within the program4. program directors also reported on benefits and challenges	<p>Purpose to identify:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. perceived understanding of CBE2. satisfaction with CBE training3. readiness and confidence for practice	<p>Purpose to identify:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. perceived competence2. preparation for entry-level practice

Methodology

- To collect data from each group, program directors were sent a survey with a request to send a link to each group.

Faculty, Preceptors, Program Directors	Students	Graduates
Surveys sent annually to capture all new FEM programs.	FEM-GP: Surveys sent annually to capture all graduating students. 2022 Standards: Surveys sent to program directors of CPs and DIs only in 2024 for comparison.	FEM-GP: Surveys sent annually one year post graduation to capture all graduates. 2022 Standards: Surveys sent to program directors of CPs and DIs only in 2024 for comparison.

Data Analysis



Total Number of Respondents per Group

Program
Directors
(n=79)

Faculty
(n=73)

Preceptors
(n=169)

Students

- GPs
n=362
- CPs/DIs
n=536
(2024)

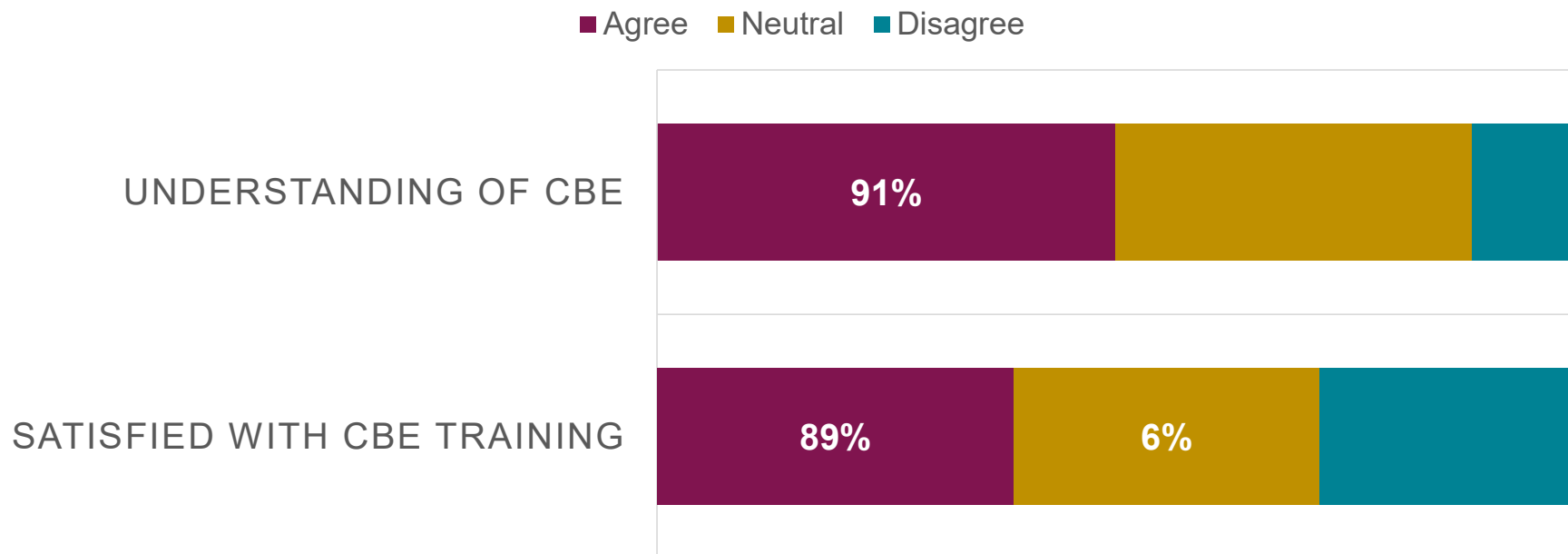
Graduates

- GPs
n=64
(2024)
- CPs/DIs
n=624
(2024)

Demonstration Program Results

Faculty, Preceptor and Student Understanding of and Satisfaction with CBE Training

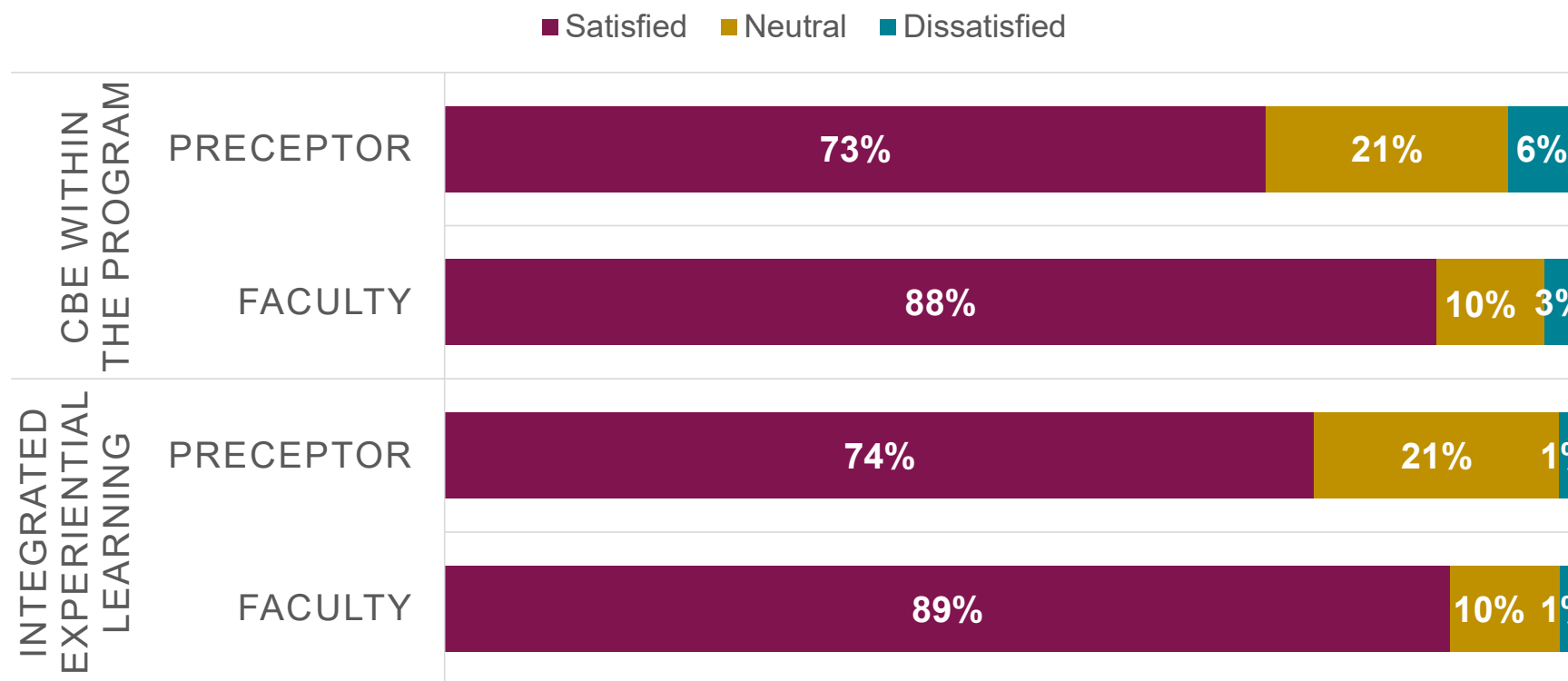
- High levels of satisfaction and understanding of CBE for 2020 - 2023



No significant differences between groups

Satisfaction of Faculty and Preceptors (2019-2023)

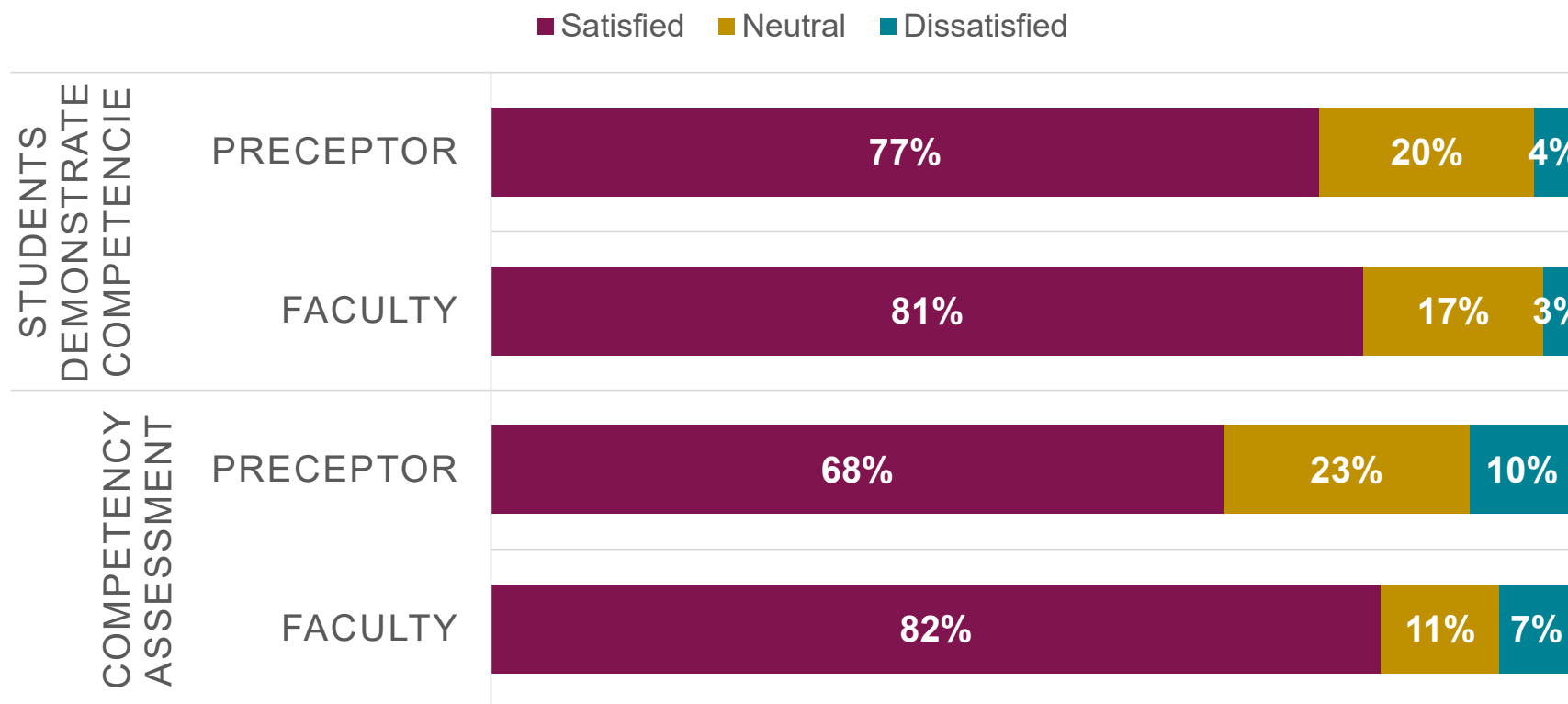
- High levels of satisfaction overall; Faculty had higher levels of satisfaction



*Significant difference in t-tests between groups for all variables $p < .05$

Satisfaction of Faculty and Preceptors (2019-2023)

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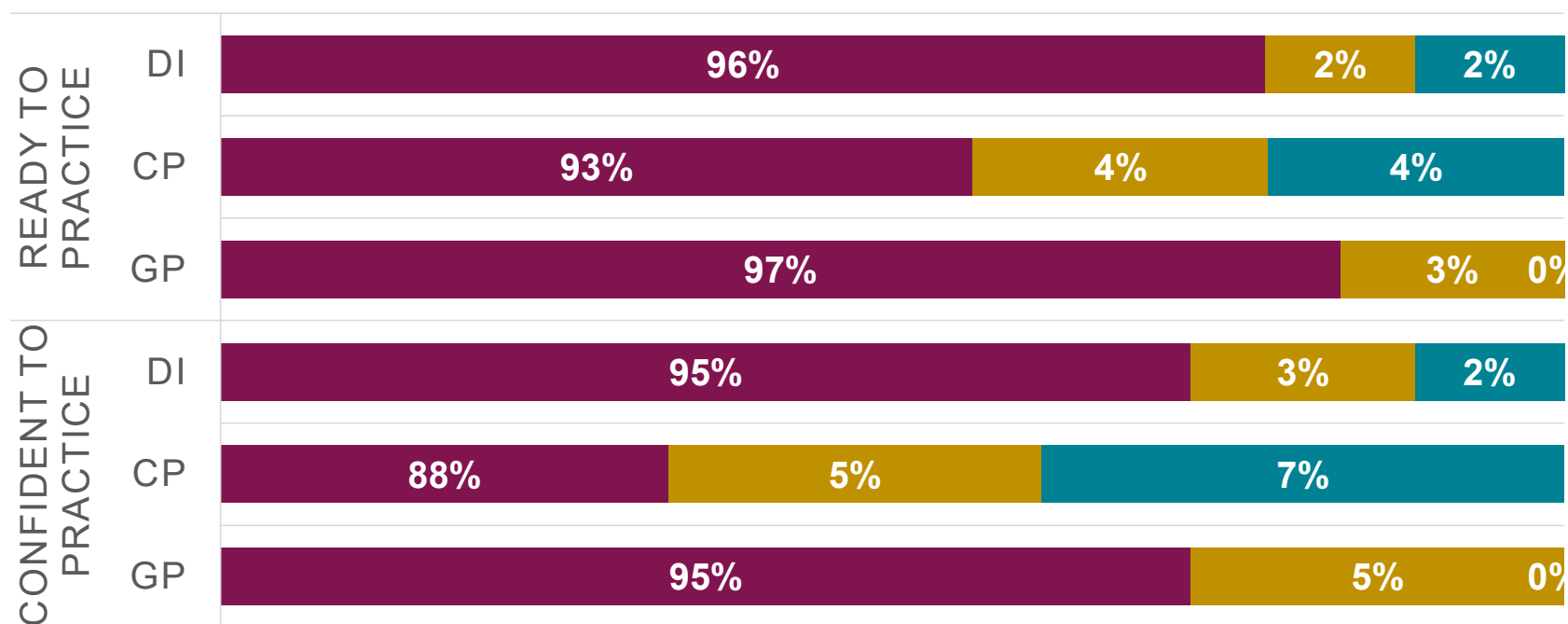


*Significant difference in t-tests between groups for all variables $p < .05$

Readiness and Confidence to Practice by Program Type by Students – 2024 Only

- All students felt they were ready and confident to practice

■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree

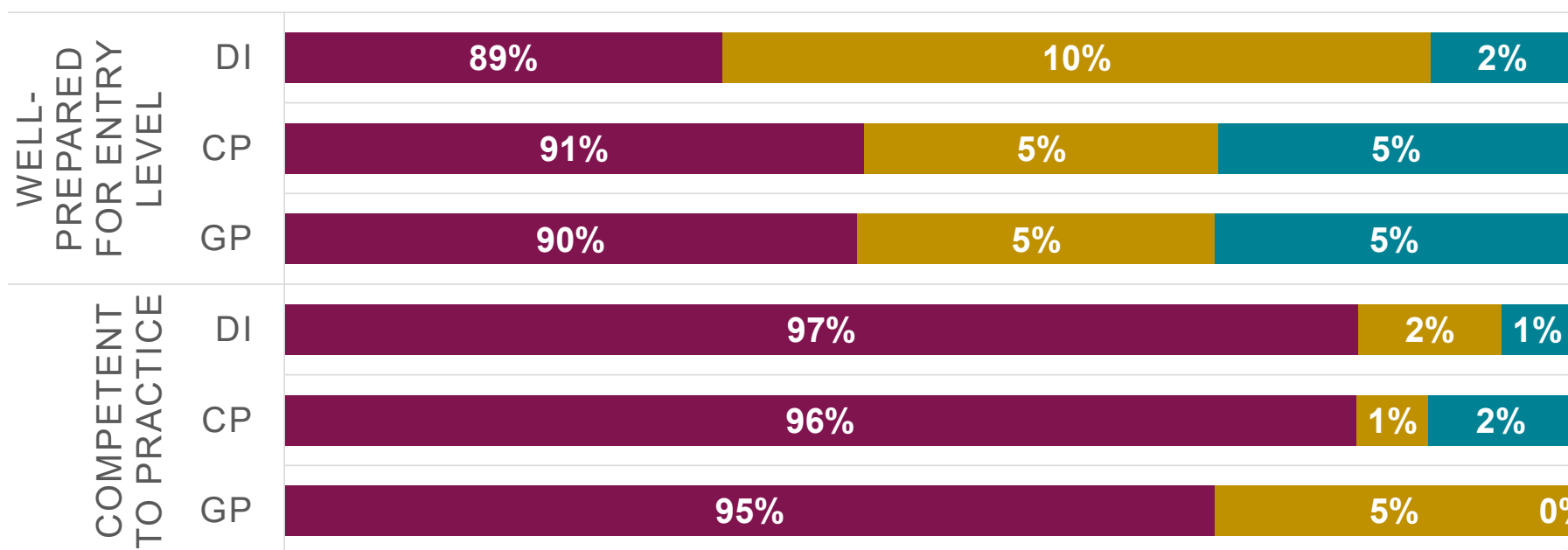


No significant differences between groups

Competence and Preparation to Practice by Graduates

- In 2024, all graduates felt they were well-prepared and competent

■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree



No significant differences between groups

Comparison of Program Outcomes: DI-CP-GP

1-year averages 2022-2023

- GPs had higher completion rates compared to CPs and DIs

	Coordinated Programs (CP)	Dietetic Internship (DI)	Graduate Programs (GP)	Significance (P Value)
Most Recent Annual Data - 2022-2023				
Total Number of Programs	54	258	23	
Total Number of Graduates	720	3,380	361	
Completion Rate	91%	96%	100%	$P < .05$
Dietetics Job Placement Rate	84%	88%	88%	
Graduates Still Seeking Jobs	2%	2%	0%	

Exam Pass Rate: DI-CP-GP

1-year averages 2022-2023

- More GP graduates passed the exam after 1st attempt and within one year

	Coordinated Programs (CP)	Dietetic Internship (DI)	Graduate Programs (GP)	Significance (P Value)
Most Recent Annual Data - 2022-2023				
Pass Rate on the RD Exam – (1 year of first attempt)	88%	88%	94%	$P < .05$
First Time Pass Rate on the RD Exam	60%	63%	70%	$P < .05$

Comparison of Program Outcomes: DI-CP-GP

Diversity Data 2020-2023

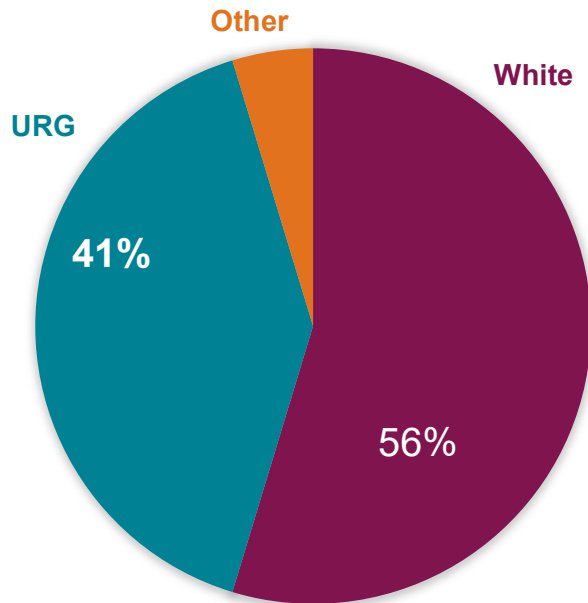
- No differences in diversity between program types

	Coordinated Programs (CP)	Dietetic Internship Programs (DI)	Graduate Programs (GP)
Most Recent Annual Data - 2022-2023			
Total Number (n)			
Number of Programs	52	250	82
Whites	885	1,897	1,114
Under-Represented Groups	414	960	510
Percentage (%)			
% Under-Represented Grps.	31.0%	30.8%	31.5%

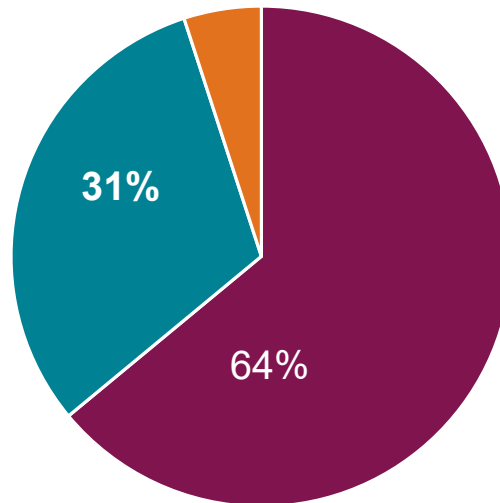
Attrition of Diversity in Dietetics

- Estimated close to 50% of students from under-represented groups (URG) in dietetics programs do not become RDN practitioners

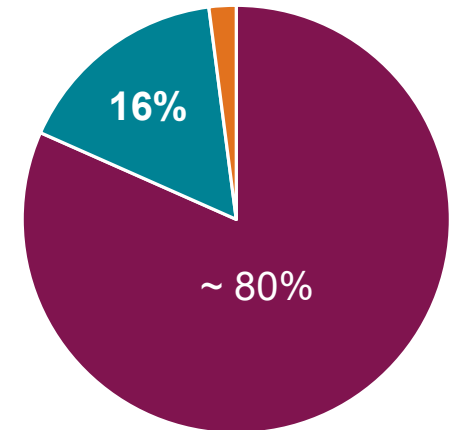
DPD Programs 2023



DI/CP/GP Programs 2023



Estimate RDN Professionals
Comp Survey 2023*



Note: %URG in DT programs was 44% in 2023

■ White ■ URM ■ Other

Qualitative Results

Program Director Reported Benefits of CBE

- Similar model as other allied health professionals
- Raises the educational standard and produces competent entry-level practitioners
- Performance indicators are helpful in defining the competencies
- Promotes advanced skills in program graduates
- Provides flexibility for programs to implement creative strategies for curriculum delivery and organization



Program Director Reported Benefits of CBE (Continued)

- Individualized educational experiences
- More attainable for second career graduate students
- Ability to pay for "internship" with financial aid
- Allowing more diversity among students accepted into program



Program Director's Reported Challenges

- Training preceptors, especially long-term preceptors
- Getting faculty on board
- Too many performance indicators
- More students than anticipated



Conclusions – Program Outcomes

- Faculty, preceptors, and students indicated high levels of satisfaction with CBE.
- Job placement rates were high for all ACEND supervised practice (CPs, DIs, GPs) programs.
- The percent of under-represented groups in all ACEND supervised practice programs were similar and averaged 31%.

Conclusions – Program Outcomes

GPs outperformed CPs and DIs in a few areas

- **Program Completion:** Students from GPs had higher rates of timely program completion than students in CPs and DIs
- **First-time RDN exam pass rate** was significantly higher than CPs (10% points higher) and DIs (7% points higher)
- **One-year RDN exam pass rate** was significantly higher than CPs and DIs (6% points higher)

Conclusions - Other Benefits of CBE

- Supporting licensure
- International recognition –
 - e.g., College of Dietitians of Ontario (CDO)–CDR pathway only recognizes GPs with CBE
- Easier pathway into the profession – supports enrollment
- Improves student assessment – supports flexibility



Image credits: College of Dietitians of Ontario



Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics



iStock - purchased

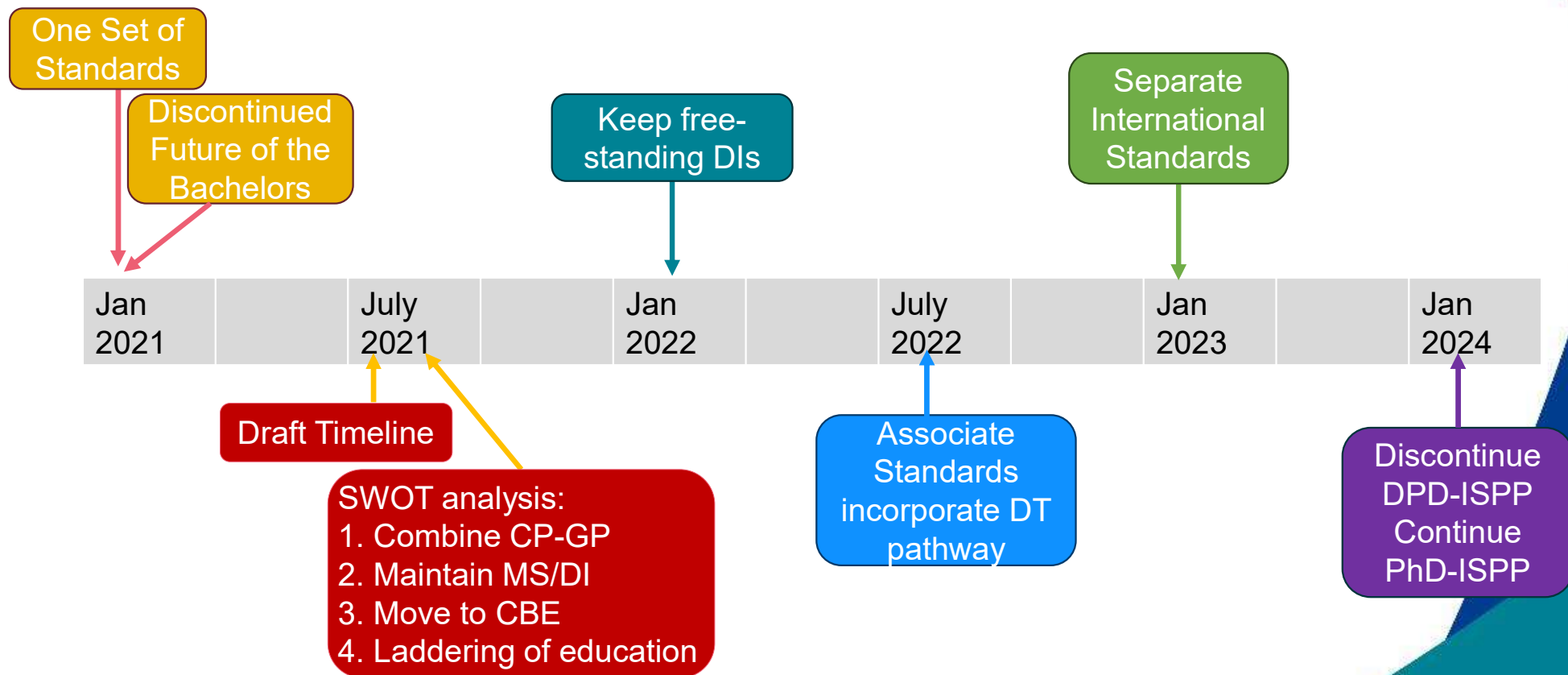


2027 Standards Development

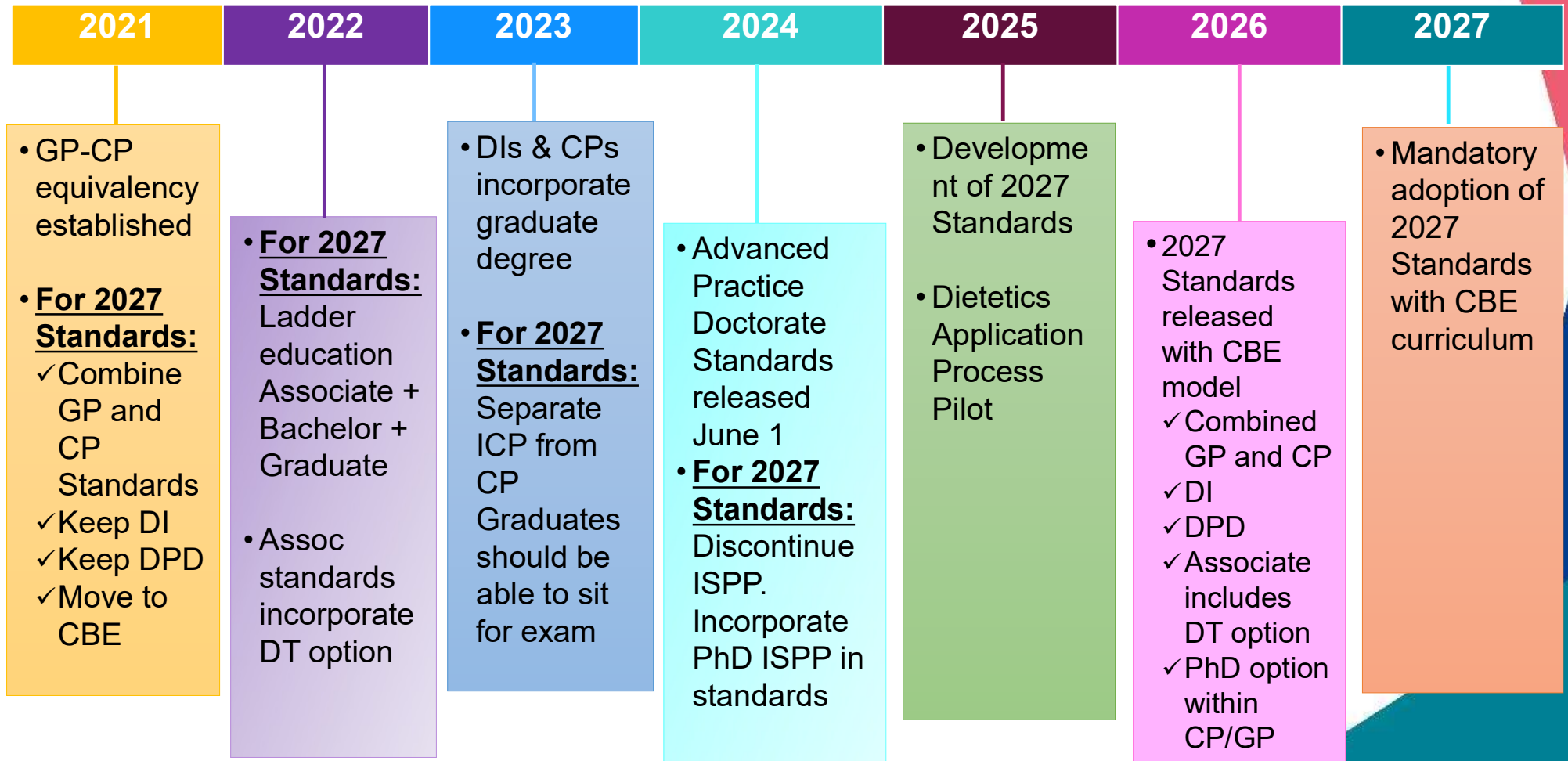
Background & Timeline

Board Discussions and Decisions: Future of ACEND Accreditation Standards

- Board discussions from January 2021 - January 2024



ACEND STANDARDS TIMELINE 2021-2027- Board Decisions

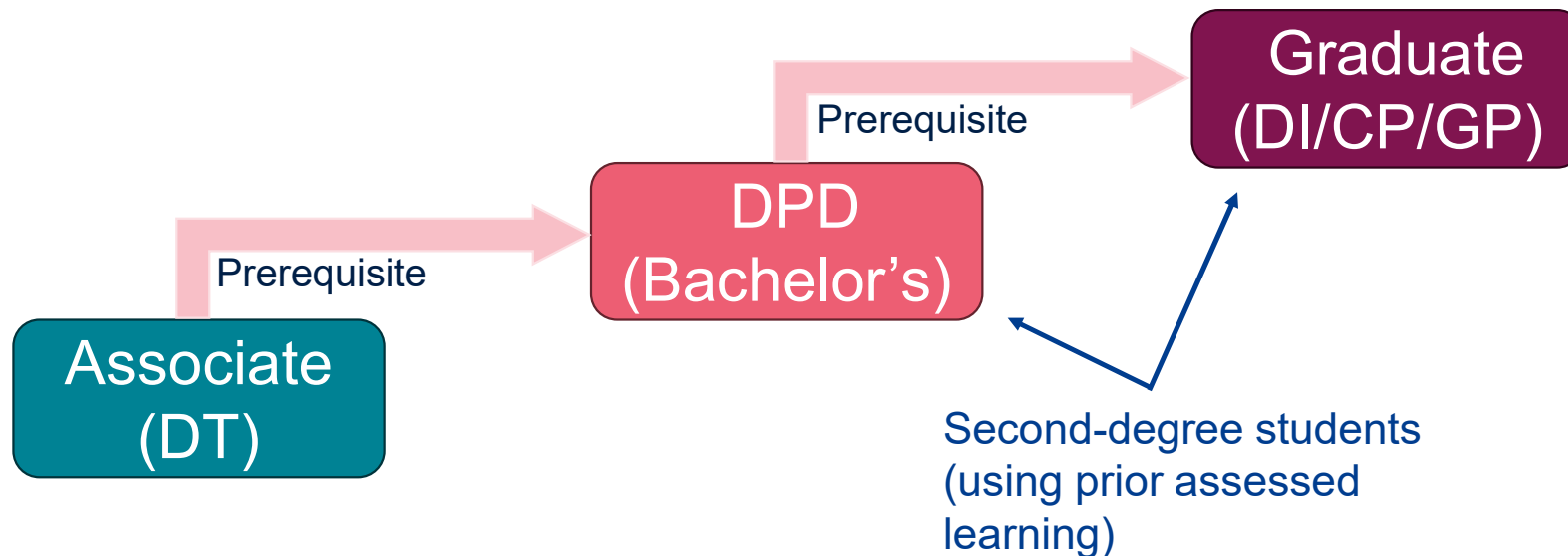


Board Discussions and Decisions: 2027 ACEND Accreditation Standards

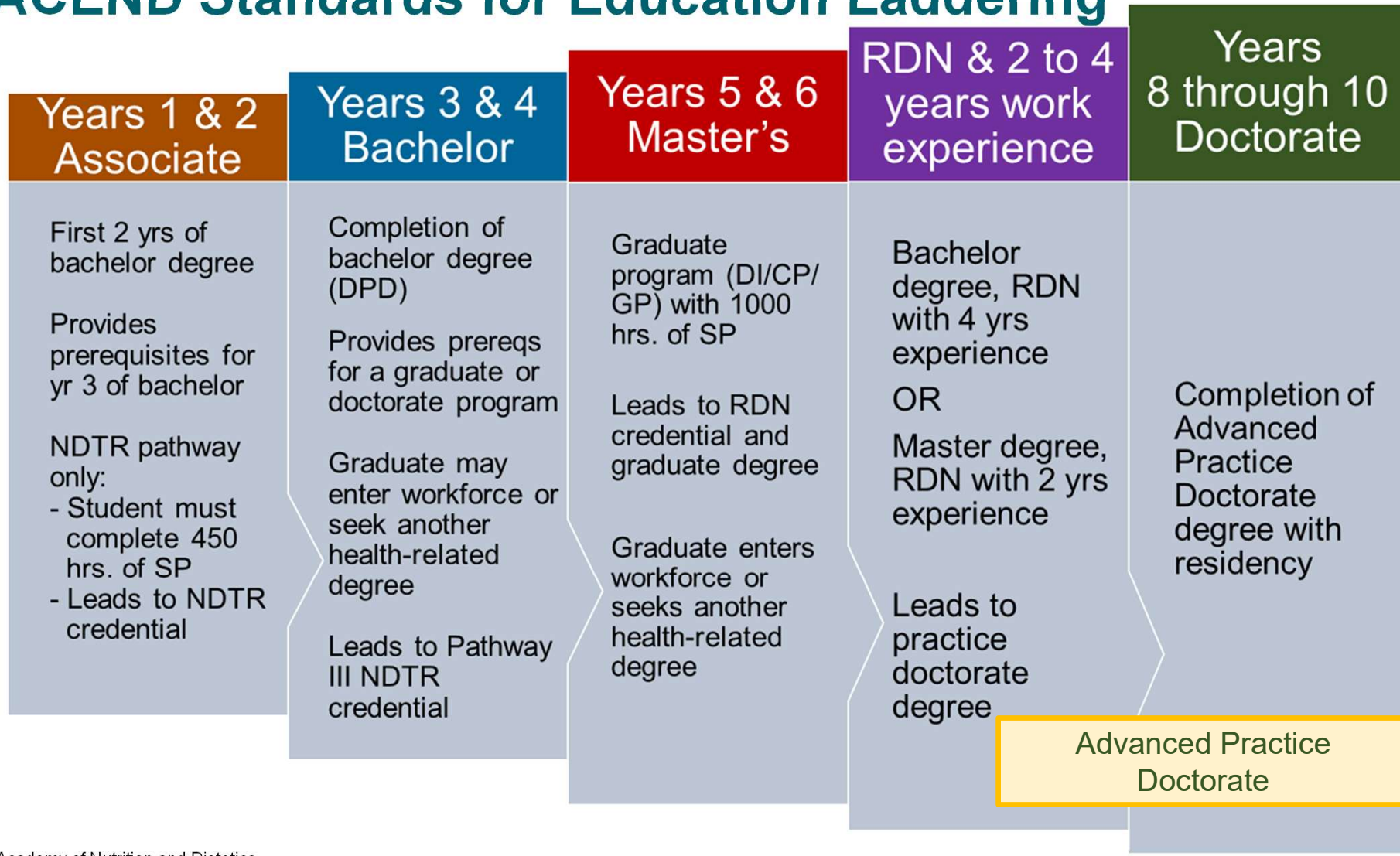
- Move all programs to competency-based education (CBE)
- Ensure education laddering
- Move to a general associate-level standards; Incorporate DT pathway
- Combine CP and GP into one set of standards
- Keep DPD plus graduate-DI as a separate pathway
 - Protect interns in intern-identified SP programs
- Move international ICP and FDE into a separate standard
- Discontinue ISPP-DPD-Verification Statement
 - Keep ISPP-PhD

Education Laddering

- The degree curriculum and student competence are built upon from the previous degree.
- Allows students to progress through successive degrees while carrying forward course credits as completed prerequisites.

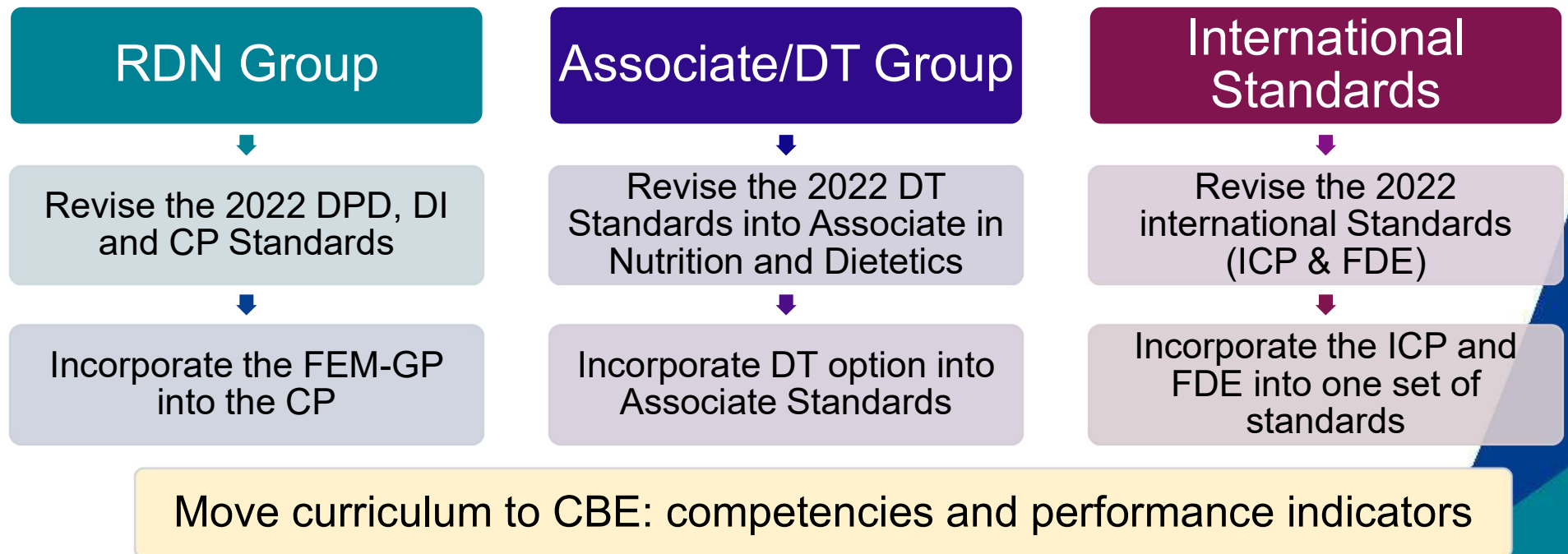


ACEND Standards for Education Laddering



ACEND Expanded Standards Committees

- Three standards committees have been established to begin work on the 2027 Standards and establish the ladder



Practice Applications

CBE has many tangible and intangible benefits:

- Improved exam pass rates save graduates money, stress, and time

	Coordinated Programs (CP)	Dietetic Internship (DI)	Graduate Programs (GP)	Significance (P Value)
Most Recent Annual Data 2022 2023				
Pass Rate on the RD Exam – (1 year of first attempt)	88%	88%	94%	$P < .05$
First Time Pass Rate on the RD Exam	60%	63%	70%	$P < .05$

- Performance Indicators articulate the practitioner's skills for better communication with legislators and the public
- CBE provides global recognition to support future pathways for practitioner mobility

Faculty and preceptors need training to develop a strong basis in CBE

Practice Applications

- All ACEND programs (DIs/CPs/GPs) produce highly satisfied students and graduates confident and ready for practice
- All dietetics education programs are enrolling a diverse student body
 - Need to collect data on diversity of dietetics professionals
 - Need to explore reasons for the profession not mirroring the diversity of ACEND program graduates
- The shortage of dietetics professionals creates an urgency
 - Education laddering is one element to support meeting the need by simplifying the pathways into dietetics and supporting enrollment



Thank You! Questions?

acend@eatright.org