ACEND Accreditation Standards

For Nutrition and Dietetics Didactic Programs (DPD)

Adopted August 1, 2026; Effective August 1, 2027

Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics

the accrediting agency for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

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Standard 1: Program Characteristics and Resources

Programs accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND®) must meet requirements including quality-assurance or oversight by other agencies, organizational structure, financial stability, sufficient resources, the awarding of degrees and/or verification statements, program length, and program leadership.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS:

1.1 The program must be housed in a college or university or offered in a consortium with a college or university. The college or university located in the U.S. or its territories must be accredited in good standing by a U.S. institutional accrediting body for higher education recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDE) or by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). Colleges and universities that are not part of the U.S.-based educational system must be authorized under applicable law by the country's ministry of education or equivalent public entity to provide an educational program beyond secondary education (see Appendix B).

a. A consortium is defined as two or more independent institutions working together under a formal written agreement to sponsor a single program. The consortium must consider itself a single education program.

1.2 The program must be integrated within the administrative structure of the sponsoring organization, show the structure, such as in an organizational chart, and indicate where the program will be housed. In a consortium, an organizational chart must clearly show the relationship of each member of the consortium to the program and where the program will be housed.

1.3 The program must demonstrate that it has:

a. Support from the upper-level administration
b. Adequate resources to accomplish its mission and goals and meet the needs of students. Resources must include:
    1. Clerical or other staff
    2. Technical support
    3. Learning resources
    4. Physical facilities
    5. Support services

c. Sufficient financial resources to support program needs:
    1. The program must describe how the program director provides input into the budgeting process, ensuring sufficient resources to achieve the program's short- and long-term goals
    2. Programs offered in a consortium must clearly define the financial and other resource contributions of each member to the total program

d. Adequate technology and resources to support a distance-learning environment if any portion of the program is offered through distance education

e. Adequate resources to support continued development and training for program faculty and staff

f. Sufficient supervised practice sites available to provide the quality, quantity, and variety of expected experiences to prepare students for their roles and responsibilities as nutrition and dietetics professionals (Not applicable to U.S.-based DPD)

g. The program must report its maximum enrollment to ensure quality, viability, and appropriate use of resources.

1.4 The program must award at least a baccalaureate degree and a verification statement upon completing program requirements to individuals who enter the program with an associate degree or less.

a. If the program admits individuals with a baccalaureate degree or higher, the program must award at least a verification statement to individuals who complete program requirements.

b. If the program admits individuals with an Associate Program (AP) or Diet Technician (DT) verification statement, competencies of years 1 through 2 for the program are covered (Appendix A).

c. If the program admits individuals without an Associate Program (AP) or Diet Technician (DT) verification statement, the program must ensure that competencies in years 1 through 2 have been covered through prerequisite coursework, prior learning assessment, or within the program (Appendix A).

d. If the program awards a graduate degree, the graduate degree must:

1. Be in a major course of study in human nutrition, food and nutrition, dietetics, public health, food systems management, or equivalent
2. Meet all the designated academic competencies and performance indicators of the Coordinated Program (CP).

1.5 The program must have one designated program director who has primary responsibility for the program and communication with ACEND. The program director must have the authority, responsibility, and sufficient time allocated to manage the program, and provide effective leadership for the program, the program faculty, and the students. The program director may have other responsibilities that do not compromise the ability to manage and lead the program. Responsibilities and time allocation for program leadership are reflected in a formal position description for the program director and approved by an administrator.

a. For programs offered in a consortium:

1. One individual must serve as the consortium program director and have primary responsibility for the program and communications with ACEND
2. Each member organization in the consortium must designate a coordinator (who may be the program director) for the program within that organization who is employed by the organization.

b. The program director's responsibilities must include, but are not limited to:

1. Authority for oversight of the program, including when program management responsibilities are delegated to other faculty or individuals
2. Provision or delegation of responsibilities to ensure year-round coverage of the director's responsibilities in the absence of the director or in cases where the director's full-time appointment does not cover 12 months
3. Development of policies and procedures for effectively leading all components of the program and ensuring fair and considerate treatment of prospective and enrolled students (such as program admission, retention and completion policies)
4. Authority to evaluate and manage the financial resources to achieve the program's outcomes and to support the academic integrity and continued viability of the program
5. Student recruitment, advisement, evaluation, and counseling. Student advisement must incorporate:
   a. All educational pathways to becoming an RDN, including admission expectations, and expectations when rotations and site selection are student-identified

b. The Dietetics Application Process and the Traffic Rules for Applicants

6. Maintenance of program accreditation, including:
   a. Timely submission of fees, reports, and requests for major program changes
   b. Maintenance of the program's student records, including student advising plans and verification statements
   c. Maintenance of complaints about the program received from students or others, including disposition of the complaint
   d. Ongoing review of the program's curriculum to meet the accreditation standards
   e. Communication and coordination with program faculty and others involved with the program and its students
   f. Facilitation of processes for continuous program evaluation
   g. Timely submission of required documentation supporting the graduate's eligibility for a Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) credentialing exam
   h. Completion of an ACEND training on the accreditation standards within one year of hire and every five years, thereafter.

c. The program director must:
   1. Have earned at least a master's degree
      a. Graduate-level DPDs: Have earned a doctoral degree
         1. Newly appointed program directors must meet this requirement
         2. Existing program directors with a master's degree are permitted to remain in their current position
   2. Be credentialed as a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN) by the Commission on Dietetic Registration, or for international programs only, the country's professional association or regulatory board for nutrition or dietetics, if applicable
   3. Have a minimum of three years of professional experience post-dietetics credentialing
   4. Be a full-time employee of the sponsoring institution as defined by the institution, or a full-time employee of another organization that has been contracted by the sponsoring institution
   5. Not direct another ACEND-accredited nutrition and dietetics education program.

d. Institutional policies related to faculty roles and workload are applied to the program in a manner that recognizes and supports the academic and practice aspects of the nutrition and dietetics program, including allocating time and/or reducing load for leadership functions provided by the director. The required minimum FTE allotment that must be devoted to program leadership is 0.25.

1.6 The program must establish its length and provide the rationale for the program's length, considering both didactic education and learning activities needed by students to demonstrate the required competencies and mandates from the program's administration and state regulation.

Standard 2: Program Mission, Goals, Objectives and Program Evaluation and Improvement

The program must have a clearly formulated and publicly stated mission with supporting goals and objectives by which it intends to prepare students for careers in nutrition and dietetics. The program must have a program evaluation plan to continuously evaluate the achievement of its mission, goals and objectives, use the plan to collect data, improve the program based on findings and update the plan accordingly.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS:

2.1 A program evaluation plan must be documented, reviewed annually, updated as needed with changes noted, and must include the following components:

a. The program mission. The program's mission must be specific to the program, distinguished from other programs in the sponsoring organization, and compatible with the mission statement or philosophy of the sponsoring organization

b. The program goals. The program must have at least two goals focused on program outcomes for graduates that are consistent with the program's mission

c. The program objectives. The Program objectives must measure the full intent of the goals and are used to evaluate the achievement of each program goal

1. The program must align the following ACEND-required objectives with its program goals and demonstrate that it is operating in the interest of students and the public. The program must set reasonable target measures when the targets are not specified. Required objectives must be evaluated annually using an average of data from the previous three years:

a. Program Completion: "At least 80% of students complete program requirements within ___ (150% of planned program length)."

b. Graduate Application, Admission, and Preparedness for RDN Programs (SPE, CP, or nutrition-related graduate program):

1. Application to RDN Programs: "At least ___ percent of program graduates apply for admission to an RDN or a graduate program within 12 months of graduation."

2. Admission to RDN Programs: "At least _____ percent of program graduates who apply to an RDN or a graduate program are admitted within 12 months of graduation."

3. Graduate Preparedness: The program must develop an objective for evaluation of graduate's preparedness for an RDN or a graduate program within 12 months of graduation.

d. Qualitative and/or quantitative data needed to determine whether goals and objectives have been achieved. In addition, the program must provide the one-year pass rate on the CDR RDN credentialing exam report

e. Groups from which data will be obtained; internal and external constituents must be represented (such as graduates, administrators, faculty, preceptors, employers, practitioners, nutrition and dietetics education program directors, faculty from other disciplines and advisory committees)

f. Evaluation methods that will be used to collect the data

g. Individuals responsible for ensuring that data are collected

h. Timeline for collecting the necessary data.

2.2 The program must evaluate the achievement of its goals and objectives based on its program evaluation plan and provide evidence that:

a. Program outcomes data are collected according to the program evaluation plan, summarized and analyzed by comparing actual achievements with objectives

b. Data analysis is used to evaluate the extent to which goals and objectives are being achieved

c. The targets set for ACEND-required objectives are met

d. Programmatic planning and outcomes evaluation are integrated with institutional planning and assessment, as appropriate.

2.3 Results of the program evaluation process must be used to identify strengths and areas for improvement relative to components of the program (such as policies, procedures, curriculum, teaching methods, faculty, preceptors, resources). Short- and long-term strategies must be developed, and actions must be taken to maintain program strengths and address areas for improvement identified through the evaluation process.

a. If program objectives are not met, program changes must be identified and actions taken to improve outcomes for unmet objective(s).

Standard 3: Curriculum, Learning Activities, and Competency Assessment

The competencies must be the basis on which the program curriculum and learning activities are built within the context of the mission and goals of the program. Demonstration of competence must be integrated in the coursework and learning activities throughout the program. The program must continuously assess student attainment of required competencies.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS:

3.1 The program must have a process for assessment of competencies (Appendix A).

a. The plan must identify the:

1. Summative assessment for each competency
2. Methods used, as well as courses and learning activities in which assessment will occur
3. Process for monitoring achievement of competencies for each student.

b. Existing programs must incorporate the competencies and performance indicators into the curriculum on or before August 1, 2028.

3.2 The Curriculum Map template must be used to document:

a. Each competency (see Appendix A)

b. Each performance indicator (see Appendix A)

c. Course(s) (including supervised practice, if applicable) in which summative assessment of competencies occurs and where performance indicators are covered

d. How the curriculum:

1. Is sequentially and logically organized
2. Progresses from introductory to more advanced learning activities
3. Builds on previous knowledge, skills, and experience to achieve the expected depth of competence by completion of the program.

3.3 The program's curriculum must provide learning activities to attain the breadth and depth of the required curriculum competencies needed to prepare students for supervised practice and graduate education.

a. Syllabi for courses taught within the academic unit must include the relevant competencies.

b. Learning activities must prepare students for professional practice:

1. Address various conditions, including, but not limited to: cancer, cardiovascular disease, critical illness, disordered eating, endocrine disorders, gastrointestinal disorders, malnutrition, neurological disorders, overweight/obesity, and renal disease
2. Implement the Nutrition Care Process with various populations with a range of abilities, cultures, and backgrounds across the life cycle, including infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, pregnancy and lactation, and late adulthood
3. Meet learner needs and competencies. The curriculum must incorporate a variety of educational approaches necessary for the delivery of curriculum content

a. If any portion of the program is offered through distance education, the program must ensure regular and substantive interaction between students and faculty.

Standard 4: Curriculum Evaluation and Improvement

The program must collect and analyze aggregate data on student competency attainment. The results of the evaluation must be used to improve the curriculum to enhance the quality of education provided.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS:

4.1 Formal curriculum review must routinely occur. The program must collect and analyze aggregate data on how the curriculum prepares students for RDN programs. The results of the aggregate data must be used to evaluate and improve the curriculum to enhance the quality of education provided:

a. Determine strengths and areas for improvement

b. Include input from students and other individuals as appropriate

c. Include assessment of comparability of educational experiences and consistency of competency achievement when different courses, delivery methods (such as distance education) are used to accomplish the same educational objectives

d. Take actions to maintain or improve student learning.

Standard 5: Faculty and Preceptors

The program must have qualified faculty and preceptors in sufficient numbers to provide the depth and breadth of learning activities required in the curriculum and exposure to the diversity of practice. Program faculty, including the program director, must show evidence of continuing competence appropriate to teaching responsibilities, through professional work experience, graduate education, continuing education, and research or other activities leading to professional growth and the advancement of their profession.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS:

5.1 The program must provide evidence that qualified and appropriately credentialed faculty are sufficient to ensure implementation of the program's curriculum and the achievement of program goals and objectives.

a. The requirements for program faculty (faculty within the academic unit) must include the following:

1. At least one full-time faculty member, or equivalent, in addition to the program director, must hold the RDN credential
2. Program faculty must meet the sponsoring institution's criteria for appointment and have sufficient education in a field related to the subject in which they teach or must meet the institution's policy for education and/or equivalent experience
3. Program faculty, including the program director, must show evidence of continuing competence and ongoing professional development appropriate to their teaching responsibilities
4. Program faculty must be provided orientation to competency-based education. the program's mission, goals, and objectives, and the ACEND Standards and required competencies
5. Program faculty must be trained in the use of distance education pedagogy and recommended practices
6. The Nutrition Care Process component must be taught by an RDN.

b. Formal evaluation of program faculty must routinely occur:

1. The program must have a process for periodic review, including input from students, of the effectiveness of faculty
2. Program faculty must receive feedback and training as needed, based on program evaluation and input from students.

5.2 The program must provide evidence that qualified and appropriately credentialed preceptors are sufficient to ensure implementation of the program's curriculum and the achievement of the program goals and objectives. (Not applicable to U.S.-based DPD)

a. The requirements for program preceptors must include the following:

1. The education and experience needed to provide appropriate guidance for supervised practice experiences. Preceptors must be licensed, as appropriate, to meet state and federal regulations, or credentialed, as needed, in the area in which they are supervising students and must be qualified to serve as educators and professional role models
2. Orientation to competency-based education, the program's mission, goals, and objectives, and the ACEND Standards and required competencies.

b. Formal evaluation of program preceptors must routinely occur:

1. The program must have a process for periodic review, including input from students, of the effectiveness of preceptors
2. Program preceptors must receive feedback and training as needed, based on program evaluation and feedback from students.

Standard 6: Supervised Practice Sites

(Not Applicable to U.S.-Based DPD. International DPD Refer to Appendix B)

The program must have policies and procedures for securing sites to maintain written agreements with institutions, organizations and/or agencies providing supervised practice experiences to meet the competencies. The program must ensure that students have secured geographically accessible rotations for timely completion of the program.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS:

6.1 Supervised practice site requirements. The program must have written policies and procedures:

a. For site selection and student placement

b. That outline the issuance and maintenance of written affiliation agreements

1. Agreements must delineate the rights and responsibilities of both the sponsoring organization and affiliating institutions, organizations and/or agencies
2. Agreements must be signed by individuals with appropriate institutionally-assigned authority in advance of placing students
3. Issuance of written affiliation agreements must be the responsibility of the program and not the student

c. That define a timeline for the periodic evaluation of the adequacy and appropriateness of supervised practice facilities.

6.2 For programs where students identify their own supervised practice sites and/or preceptors, the program must:

a. Ensure that clinical rotation sites are secured before students begin their supervised practice component

b. Have written policies describing the process of securing sites when students are unable to locate a site(s) or preceptor(s) to ensure timely completion of the program.

Standard 7: Information to Prospective Students and the Public

The program must provide clear, consistent, and accurate information about all program requirements to prospective students and the public at large.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS:

7.1 Program policies, procedures, practices, and materials related to student recruitment and admission must comply with state and federal laws and regulations. Recruitment and admission practices must be applied fairly and consistently.

7.2 All program information for prospective students and the public must be current, accurate, and consistent and provide a reference to where complete program information can be found. Information about the program must be readily available to prospective students and the public via a program website and must include at least the following:

a. Accreditation status, including the full name, address, phone number, and website of ACEND on the program's website homepage

b. Description of the program, including the program's mission, goals, and objectives

c. A statement that program outcomes data are available upon request along with program contact information

d. Information about the requirements and process to become a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN), including education, supervised practice, the CDR credentialing exam, state licensure/certification, states for which the program meets State requirements for licensure/certification, and how the program fits into the process

e. Estimated cost to students, including:

   1. Estimated total cost of tuition and institution fees (such as lab and technology fees)
   2. Estimated required program-specific costs, including supplies and services (such as program course fees, drug testing, lab coats, and membership fees)
   3. A description of variable costs related to the program (such as books, transportation, housing, and other expenses)

f. Availability of financial aid and loan deferments (federal or private), scholarships, stipends, and other monetary support, if applicable

g. Application and admission requirements, including information on the Dietetics Application Process and Traffic Rules

h. Academic and program calendar or schedule

i. Graduation and program completion requirements, including:

   1. Requirements to earn the verification statement
   2. Maximum time allowed to complete program requirements and/or receive a verification statement

j. Guidance about distance education components, such as the expectations for required equipment, competence and skills related to technology, and other requirements, if applicable

k. If students are required to locate their own supervised practice sites and/or preceptors, requirements for this must be described, including the program's role and responsibility to secure geographically accessible sites for students to ensure timely completion of the program (Not applicable to U.S.-based DPD)

l. A statement indicating whether prior learning assessment is available for coursework and/or experiences.

Standard 8: Policies and Procedures for Enrolled Students

The program must have written policies and procedures that protect the rights of students and are consistent with current institutional practice.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS:

8.1 Programs must have policies and procedures specific to nutrition and dietetics programs or refer to institutional policies. The policies must be provided to students in a single comprehensive document, such as in a program handbook or on a program website. Policies and procedures must include:

a. Student Support

1. Support for the variety of needs of students
2. Ensure all students are treated with dignity and respect by program faculty and preceptors
3. Access to student support services, such as health services, counseling, tutoring and testing, and financial aid resources

b. Student Performance Monitoring

1. The process of assessment, including academic performance, academic integrity, and professionalism
2. Academic performance concerns are addressed in a timely and adequate manner to facilitate students' progression in the program

c. Student Remediation and Retention

1. The process for evaluating the need for remedial instruction and other support
2. The procedure for creating an action plan that delineates where program expectations have not been met and the actions needed to satisfy program requirements

d. Confidentiality

1. Protection of privacy of student information, including students in distance learning
2. When using distance instruction and/or online testing, strategies used to verify the identity of a student

e. Requirements for Program Completion

1. Requirements to earn the verification statement
2. Maximum time allowed to complete program requirements and receive a verification statement must follow the sponsoring academic institution's policy. In the absence of an institutional policy, the maximum time must be no less than five years

f. Issuance of Verification Statement

1. Providing verification statements, including timing, delivery method, and number issued, if applicable, to all students who complete program requirements

g. Supervised Practice (g1-g7 not applicable to U.S.-based DPD)

1. Securing geographically accessible sites for students
2. Tracking individual students' supervised practice hours in professional work settings and in alternate practice activities. Hours granted for prior learning, if given, also must be documented.
3. Insurance requirements, including those for professional liability

4. Liability for safety in travel to or from assigned areas
5. Injury or illness while in a facility for supervised practice
6. Drug testing and criminal background checks, if required by the supervised practice facilities
7. Requirement that students doing supervised practice must not be used to replace employees

h. Complaints

1. The process for filing and handling complaints about the program from students and other individuals that includes recourse to an administrator other than the program director and prevents retaliation
2. The process for submitting written complaints to ACEND related to program noncompliance with ACEND accreditation standards after all other options with the program and institution have been exhausted

i. Credit for Prior Education and Experience

1. Evaluating the equivalency of prior learning and experience to the program competencies. Otherwise, the program must indicate that it does not assess prior learning or competence

j. Disciplinary/termination procedures

k. Additional Policies

1. Student access to their own student file
2. Program schedule, vacations, holidays, and leaves of absence
3. Compensation practices when students are paid compensation as part of the program
4. Withdrawal and refund of tuition and fees.

APPENDIX A

Bachelor Level Competencies for Nutrition and Dietetics

ACEND's Bachelor Level Competencies and Performance Indicators are organized hierarchically from broad learning expectations to more specific indicators.

- Level 1: The Units (e.g., Unit 1, Unit 2) are the broad content areas that describe a group of competencies and a focus area
- Level 2: The Competencies (e.g., 1.1, 1.2) follow and describe what learners should achieve within that unit. Competencies identify expected performance (knowledge, skill, and judgment)
- Level 3: The Performance Indicators are the sub-statements (e.g., 1.1.1, 1.1.2) that define each competency or the level of expected performance into specific, measurable skills that demonstrate how the broader outcome is applied in practice

Unit 1: Foundational Knowledge

1.1 Apply foundational sciences and knowledge in food and nutrition (S)

1.1.1 Describe nutrient metabolism, including the integration and regulation of macro- and micro-nutrition (K)

1.1.2 Apply organic chemistry and biochemistry knowledge to make informed food and nutrition decisions for medical nutrition therapy and optimal health (S)

1.1.3 Apply an understanding of social, physical, and behavioral factors that impact food and nutrition across the lifespan (S)

1.1.4 Integrate knowledge of molecular factors, including genes, proteins, and metabolites, in the development and management of disease (K)

1.2 Apply knowledge of pharmacology and pharmacokinetics to recommend, prescribe, and administer medical nutrition therapy (K)

1.2.1 Identify the classifications of nutraceutical and pharmacological agents and their actions on the body (K)

1.2.2 Apply knowledge of classifications, categories, and indications for commonly used medications and supplements (for example, weight management, hypertension, diuretics, cardiovascular disease, diabetes) (K)

1.2.3 Demonstrate understanding of pharmacokinetics as it applies to medications and supplements (K)

1.3 Apply an understanding of the impact of integrative and functional nutrition on disease, health, and wellness (S)

1.3.1 Explain how nutrients and nutrition supplements influence disease, physical activity, and wellness (K)

1.3.2 Evaluate the safety and efficacy of integrative and functional nutrition approaches and interventions (S)

1.3.3 Critically evaluate evidence-based literature to inform decisions about the use of integrative and functional nutrition (S)

1.4 Integrate research methods and principles into evidence-based practice (S)

1.4.1 Explain the steps of the research process (K)

1.4.2 Choose appropriate statistical methods, perform statistical analysis, and interpret results in various data analysis situations (S)

1.4.3 Evaluate research to support evidence-based decision-making and draw valid conclusions (S)

Unit 2: Community Services

2.1 Promote health and wellness for individuals and groups (S)

2.1.1 Engage in community outreach to address the nutrition-related needs of the target group (S)

2.1.2 Use nutrition and health coaching strategies to create a shared vision and goals with individuals (S)

2.1.3 Assess and monitor the effectiveness, adequacy, and quality of infant feeding practices (S)

2.1.4 Provide evidence-based breastfeeding education to promote human milk feeding, human lactation, nutrition, and well-being (S)

2.2 Design and implement a program that addresses the nutrition needs for health, wellness, and disease prevention (S)

2.2.1 Conduct a community needs assessment to identify the health status and behavior of the community and the gaps in resources and services (S)

2.2.2 Provide evidence-based education to address nutrition misinformation in a manner that supports informed decision-making (S)

2.2.3 Demonstrate an understanding of cultural differences as they pertain to patient/client care (S)

Unit 3: Leadership

3.1 Apply critical thinking to make ethical and evidence-based decisions (S)

3.1.1 Make decisions based on evidence-based practice and ethical principles (S)

3.1.2 Define the problem and determine steps for resolution (S)

3.1.3 Identify fundamental research concepts that inform evidence-based practice (K)

3.2 Demonstrate ethical and professional behaviors (S)

3.2.1 Apply knowledge of the professional Code of Ethics (S)

3.2.2 Maintain confidentiality and security when sharing, transmitting, storing, and managing protected health information (S)

3.2.3 Perform self-reflection to identify skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences, and develop goals for self-improvement (D)

3.2.4 Identify and take steps to manage unethical, incompetent, and unsafe behavior (S)

3.2.5 Practice in a manner that respects patient/client needs (S)

3.2.6 Apply nutrition-related legislation, regulations, and standards of practice (K)

3.3 Apply leadership skills to guide practice (K)

3.3.1 Apply knowledge of leadership and management theories (K)

3.3.2 Gain an understanding of social cues and group dynamics to facilitate desired outcomes (K)

Unit 4: Nutrition Care Process and Medical Nutrition Therapy for Individuals

4.1 Conduct nutrition screening to identify health and nutrition-related problems (D)

4.1.1 Interview individuals and gather information from other sources, following established tools and guidelines (D)

4.1.2 Identify and prioritize needs based on screening results (S)

4.2 Conduct a nutrition assessment to inform the nutrition diagnosis (S)

4.2.1 Obtain diet history and the level of physical activity (D)

4.2.2 Select nutrition assessment tools for individuals and groups (S)

4.2.3 Recognize pertinent laboratory values and their impact on health and nutrition (S)

4.2.4 Address nutritional risk factors across the life span (S)

4.2.5 Conduct a nutrition-focused physical examination and interpret results (D)

4.2.6 Identify signs and symptoms of malnutrition and nutrient deficiencies and excesses (S)

4.2.7 Assess individual energy and nutrient needs based on physiology and health status (S)

4.2.8 Recognize and communicate the causes of disease and nutritional risks (K)

4.2.9 Develop a problem, etiology, signs and symptoms (PES) statement to communicate a nutritional diagnosis (S)

4.3 Develop an individualized plan of care that addresses nutrition care needs, diagnosis, and client/patient nutrition goals (S)

4.3.1 Develop goals that address nutrition care needs and diagnosis (S)

4.3.2 Create a nutrition prescription to address nutrition goals (S)

4.3.3 Describe the regulatory system related to billing and coding, what services are reimbursable by third-party payers, and how reimbursement may be obtained (K)

4.4 Create an intervention, monitoring, and evaluation plan to address nutrition diagnosis (S)

4.4.1 Evaluate and address the influence of food consumption on the development and management of diseases (S)

4.4.2 Address food-medication interactions and food allergies to ensure client/patient safety (S)

4.4.3 Apply medical nutrition therapy principles for the management of enteral and parenteral nutrition (S)

4.4.4 Explain the implications of genetic variation for nutritional needs and medical nutrition therapy (K)

4.4.5 Instruct clients/patients on self-monitoring blood glucose levels, with consideration of their diabetes medication, and the medical nutrition therapy plan (S)

4.4.6 Evaluate the impact of nutrition intervention on the nutrition diagnosis (S)

4.4.7 Document all elements of the nutrition care process following professional standards and organizational policies (S)

4.5 Apply counseling and behavior change theories to promote nutritional health and disease prevention (S)

4.5.1 Identify the benefits, risks, and limitations of counseling (K)

4.5.2 Apply counseling theories, psychological methods, and strategies that empower patients/clients to make changes (S)

4.5.3 Explain the effect of mental health on food behavior (K)

Unit 5: Foodservice

5.1 Apply sanitation and food safety principles in compliance with state and federal regulations (D)

5.1.1 Apply sanitation principles related to food safety, personnel, and consumers (D)

5.1.2 Demonstrate awareness of food regulations specific to the practice settings (K)

5.1.3 Adhere to policies and procedures to optimize food and water safety in compliance with state and federal regulations (D)

5.2 Design meals that promote health and disease management for various individuals and groups across the lifespan (D)

5.2.1 Develop and modify menus and meal plans to ensure acceptability and affordability, accommodating for age, dietary patterns, preferences, and health status (D)

5.2.2 Evaluate recipe acceptability using sensory evaluation methods (D)

5.2.3 Modify recipes and ingredients based on preferences, dietary needs, trends, seasonality, and product availability (D)

5.2.4 Design therapeutic diets applying food science principles (D)

5.2.5 Adjust recipes to scale for the desired quantity (D)

5.2.6 Modify recipes or develop a food product integrating principles of chemistry and food science (D)

5.2.7 Prepare infant formula and human milk safely and accurately to meet patient/client needs (S)

5.3 Manage the production, distribution, and service of quantity and quality food systems (S)

5.3.1 Perform functions related to purchasing, production, and service of food that meet nutrition guidelines, cost parameters, and health needs (S)

5.3.2 Perform human resource functions to achieve goals (S)

5.3.3 Perform foodservice budget activities to achieve financial goals (S)

5.3.4 Apply workplace safety principles to identify and mitigate safety hazards (S)

5.3.5 Analyze organizational needs, including workforce, equipment, space, and technology, to ensure sustainability (S)

5.3.6 Analyze the workflow design and make recommendations to improve system efficiency (S)

5.3.7 Develop disaster planning protocols to ensure safe and continuous food service (S)

5.3.8 Conduct a facility analysis of equipment based on resource availability, anticipated future growth, and sustainability (S)

5.4 Apply knowledge of purchasing, receiving, and storage of food products (S)

5.4.1 Identify inventory management principles to ensure food production needs are met (S)

5.4.2 Manage the process of receiving and storing products, demonstrating adherence to food safety code guidelines and regulations (K)

5.4.3 Manage the relationship between forecasting and production as it pertains to recipe needs and organizational demand (S)

Prerequisite Competencies for the Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD)

Programs must ensure that competencies in years 1 through 2 have been met through prerequisite coursework, prior learning assessment, or within the program. Programs are expected to demonstrate the process for setting and evaluating these prerequisites. Assessment of year 1 and 2 competencies is not a requirement and they will not be incorporated in the Competency Assessment Table.

Associate Level Competencies for Nutrition and Dietetics (Years 1 & 2)

Unit 1: Foundational Knowledge

1.1 Apply foundational sciences and knowledge in food and nutrition (K)

- 1.1.1 Perform food and nutrition calculations using math skills (S)
- 1.1.2 Apply knowledge of microbiology to food safety principles (K)
- 1.1.3 Demonstrate knowledge of chemistry to the fundamentals of nutrition (K)
- 1.1.4 Apply knowledge of basic food science to food preparation techniques and culinary nutrition (S)
- 1.1.5 Demonstrate knowledge of anatomy and physiology related to disease, wellness, and nutrition (K)
- 1.1.6 Demonstrate knowledge of psychology, sociology, or anthropology of human behavior (K)
- 1.1.7 Integrate principles of nutrition across the lifespan (K)
- 1.1.8 Demonstrate appropriate use of medical terminology and abbreviations (K)
- 1.1.9 Recognize the components of the Nutrition Care Process (K)
- 1.1.10 Compare health care delivery systems that impact nutrition and dietetics (K)

Unit 2: Community Services

2.1 Promote health and wellness for individuals and groups (D)

- 2.1.1 Plan meals that promote health for individuals and target groups (D)
- 2.1.2 Apply nutrition and health coaching strategies to meet the goals of individuals (S)
- 2.1.3 Direct patients/clients to resources and services, including RDN, based on identified needs and access (S)
- 2.1.4 Perform waived point-of-care tests, anthropometric and body composition measurements (D)
- 2.1.5 Discuss the influence of the determinants of health on nutrition and the well-being of individuals and communities (D)
- 2.1.6 Demonstrate an understanding of cultural differences that impact food and nutrition (D)

2.2 Provide education to individuals and groups based on the learners' determinants of health (S)

- 2.2.1 Select current evidence-based educational materials based on audience needs (D)
- 2.2.2 Apply learning principles to modify and deliver education based on the learners' determinants of health (S)
- 2.2.3 Provide education using various delivery methods to promote health and wellness (S)
- 2.2.4 Evaluate the effectiveness of education and make modifications as required (S)

Unit 3: Leadership

3.1 Apply critical thinking to make ethical and evidence-based decisions (S)

3.1.1 Determine the credibility of information and sources (S)

3.1.2 Identify nutrition resources and apply evidence-based guidelines to inform decisions (S)

3.2 Demonstrate ethical and professional behaviors (S)

3.2.1 Demonstrate ethical behaviors in accordance with the professional Code of Ethics (S)

3.2.2 Maintain confidentiality and security when sharing, transmitting, storing, and managing protected health information (K)

3.2.3 Perform self-reflection to identify skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences, and develop goals for self-improvement (D)

3.2.4 Prioritize activities to manage time and workload (S)

3.3 Advocate for opportunities in the nutrition and dietetic profession (S)

3.3.1 Identify community and organizational support services and resources (K)

3.3.2 Engage in advocacy efforts that impact nutrition and dietetics at the local, state, or national level (S)

3.3.3 Demonstrate self-advocacy for financial and professional opportunities and advancement (S)

3.4 Work collaboratively with teams to achieve desired outcomes (S)

3.4.1 Identify the roles and responsibilities of interprofessional team members (K)

3.4.2 Demonstrate active participation and promote teamwork, respecting opinions and experiences (S)

3.4.3 Recognize differences and manage conflict (S)

3.5 Demonstrate effective professional communication skills (D)

3.5.1 Communicate in a clear, effective, and respectful manner (D)

3.5.2 Identify and address barriers to communication (S)

3.5.3 Adapt communications for a target audience (D)

3.5.4 Ensure timely, clear, accurate, and valid documentation using correct spelling and grammar (D)

3.5.5 Use communication skills to influence or produce a desired outcome during negotiations or conflict resolution discussions (D)

3.6 Engage in management and continuous quality activities (S)

3.6.1 Understand budgeting principles to achieve financial targets (K)

3.6.2 Incorporate marketing principles in the promotion of services and products (S)

3.6.3 Recognize principles of sustainability to minimize waste and protect the environment (K)

3.6.4 Collect data to inform program planning, evaluation, and quality improvement (S)

APPENDIX B

Accreditation Supplement for International Programs

The Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) is engaged globally and is committed to ensuring quality education to foster a strong nutrition and dietetics profession worldwide.

Nutrition and dietetics programs accredited by ACEND and located outside the U.S. and its territories must meet all the ACEND Standards and Required Elements established for U.S.-based programs, except where otherwise specified within this Appendix.

Standard 1: Program Characteristics and Resources

Required Element 1.1

The program must be housed in a college or university or offered in a consortium with a college or university.

- If accreditation or a quality assurance process has been established by the country's professional association or regulatory board for nutrition or dietetics, the program must be recognized by this process before applying to ACEND for candidacy for accreditation, and it must be housed in a college or university.
- International programs must be in operation and have enrolled students to apply for eligibility.
- If the native language of the sponsoring institution is not English, the institution must provide all program documents (application materials, published materials, course outlines, handbooks, etc.) to ACEND and its reviewers in English.

Required Element 1.3f

Programs seeking review of supervised practice hours must meet the requirements within RE 1.3f.

Required Element 1.4

The program must award at least a baccalaureate degree equivalent to a baccalaureate degree conferred by a U.S. accredited college or university.

Required Element 1.5c1

The program director's degree must be equivalent to at least a master's degree conferred by a U.S.-accredited college or university.

Required Element 1.5c2

The program director must be credentialed by the country's professional association or regulatory board for nutrition or dietetics, if such an association or board exists. A credential as a registered dietitian nutritionist by the Commission on Dietetic Registration is <u>not</u> required.

Required Element 1.5d

Programs seeking review of supervised practice hours must meet the following requirement:

Institutional policies related to faculty roles and workload are applied to the program in a manner that recognizes and supports the academic and practice aspects of the nutrition and dietetics program, including allocating time and/or reducing load for leadership functions provided by the director. Time release may be distributed among other qualified individuals.

1. For programs with a maximum enrollment greater than 5 students, there is a required minimum FTE allotment that must be devoted to program leadership based on total annual approved maximum enrollment (full- and part-time):
    a. Between 6 to 10 students = 0.5 FTE or greater
    b. Add 0.1 FTE for each additional 2 students

Standard 1: Program Characteristics and Resources (Continued)

Required Element 1.6

Programs seeking review of supervised practice hours must meet the following requirements (1.6a and 1.6b) for supervised practice hours:

a. The program must be planned so that students complete at least 700 hours of supervised practice experiences with a minimum of 500 hours in professional work settings; the remaining hours may be in alternate supervised experiences that closely mimic real-world experiences

b. The program must document the planned hours in professional work settings and in alternate supervised experiences

   1. The program must include rotations in clinical, community, and foodservice settings
   2. The clinical rotation must include experiences in settings with high-acuity patients, such as hospitals, long-term care facilities, and other outpatient clinics with high acuity to ensure exposure to a varying range of clinical conditions and levels of patient acuity
   3. The majority of the professional work settings hours spent in the clinical rotation must be completed onsite.

Additional Requirement Under Standard 1

The program must submit a formal request to the ACEND board of directors if it believes that it cannot meet any required element within the standards or any competency or performance indicators for reasons related to the country's education system, health-care system, or cultural practices. For each required element, competency, or performance indicator that cannot be met, the request must include:

1. The required element, competency, or performance indicator number and its description
2. A detailed explanation of why the required element, competency, or performance indicator cannot be met
3. A detailed recommendation for an equivalent required element, competency, or performance indicator to replace it, if applicable.

Standard 2: Program Mission, Goals, Objectives and Program Evaluation and Improvement

Required Element 2.1c.1b

"Graduate Application, Admission, and Preparedness for RDN Programs" objectives replaced with "Graduate Preparedness" objectives below:

b. Graduate Preparedness:

   1. At least _____ percent of graduate survey respondents who report seeking employment are employed in nutrition and dietetics or related fields within 12 months of graduation.
   2. The program must develop an objective for evaluation of graduate's preparedness for graduate programs within 12 months of graduation.

Standard 5: Faculty and Preceptors

Required Element 5.1a

A credential as a registered dietitian nutritionist by the Commission on Dietetic Registration is not required. The faculty member must be credentialed by the country's professional association or regulatory board for nutrition or dietetics, if such an association or board exists.

Required Element 5.2

Programs seeking review of supervised practice hours must meet the requirements for preceptors within Required Element 5.2.

Standard 6: Supervised Practice Sites

Required Element 6.1

Programs seeking review of supervised practice hours must meet the requirements within Required Element 6.1.

Required Element 6.2 (Not applicable to International DPD)

Required Element 6.2 is not applicable to international programs seeking review of supervised practice hours unless the program expects students to identify their own supervised practice preceptor and/or rotations.

Standard 7: Information to Prospective Students and the Public

Required Element 7.2d

In addition to the information about the requirements and process to become a U.S. registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN), the program must also provide information about any requirements and process for credentialing/licensure/ certification within the country, if applicable.

Required Element 7.2g

The program is not required to provide information on the Dietetics Application Process and Traffic Rules.

Standard 8: Policies and Procedures for Enrolled Students

Required Element 8.1b

The program is not required to provide information on the Dietetics Application Process and Traffic Rules for Applicants.

Required Element 8.1h

Programs seeking review of supervised practice hours must meet the required elements within Required Element 8.1h, if applicable.