

# **Rationale for Future Education Preparation of Nutrition and Dietetics Practitioners**

February, 2015  
Updated: July, 2015  
Updated: August, 2015  
Updated: January, 2017

Updated: March, 2017  
Updated: November, 2017  
Updated: August, 2018

## **Focus: Public Comment on Revised Draft (Spring 2017) of FEM Standards for Associate, Bachelor and Master Degrees**

- [Appendix A \(Stakeholder Questionnaire on Revised Standards\)](#)

**PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE REVISED DRAFT  
OF THE *FUTURE EDUCATION MODEL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS  
FOR ASSOCIATE, BACHELOR’S AND MASTER’S DEGREE PROGRAMS  
IN NUTRITION AND DIETETICS*  
SPRING 2017**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this project was to gather information from various stakeholders on the revised draft *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards for Associate, Bachelor’s and Master’s Degree Programs in Nutrition and Dietetics*.

**METHODOLOGY**

ACEND® conducted an online survey (February – April, 2017) to gather stakeholder comments related to the draft *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards*. A copy of the questionnaire is included in [Appendix A](#).

The questionnaire was divided into two sections. The first section requested demographic information. The second section included open-ended questions requested comments on the standards for each degree level.

**RESULTS**

A total of 285 individuals responded to the online public comment survey (Table 11). Additionally ACEND representatives gathered oral and written comments from the more than 300 attendees at the regional Nutrition and Dietetics Educators and Preceptors (NDEP) meetings. The fewer numbers of comments and comments by those who did respond suggested that many of the revisions that had been made to the first draft of the Future Education Model Standards had addressed concerns previously raised.

Tables 2-4 include the themes that emerged from the comments for each degree program and ACEND’s response to each.

Table 1. Individuals providing public comments

<b>Role</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
Practitioners	112	39.3
Program Directors	51	17.8
Preceptors	34	12.0
Program Faculty Members	25	8.8
Students/Interns	17	6.0
Employers	16	5.6
Professionals in Other Disciplines	8	2.8
Other <sup>a</sup>	22	7.7

<sup>a</sup> Other includes former program directors, retired faculty and practitioners

Table 2. Public comments related to Future Education Model Standards for Associate Degree Programs and ACEND decision

<b>Comments</b>	<b>Examples of Comments</b>	<b>ACEND Decision</b>
Associate degree for Nutrition Health Associate	This new degree/position should be implemented as proposed	Continue with development of associate degree standards with competencies designed to prepare a community support practitioner; evaluate outcomes in the demonstration programs
	This option should be eliminated, there are not positions for this proposed associate degree practitioner	
	This position will undermine the role of the RDN	
Informatics competencies and performance indicators	Use of software applications is standard practice in community organizations; strengthen informatics competencies	Individual is expected to basic use of technology; Performance indicators reworded to reflect use of technology
Level of verbs	Some verbs are too high a level, i.e. "coordinating a program"	Reviewed verbs and changed some, i.e. "supports program coordination"
Hours of supervised learning	Concern that the number of required hours of supervised learning is not specified	Continue to focus program on competency assessment and not specify hours; evaluate outcomes in the demonstration programs

Table 3. Public comments related to Future Education Model Standards for Bachelor’s Degree Programs and ACEND decision

<b>Comments</b>	<b>Examples of Comments</b>	<b>ACEND Decision</b>
Bachelor’s degree for Nutrition and Dietetics Technician	This should be implemented as proposed	Continue with development of bachelor’s degree standards with competencies designed to prepare a nutrition and dietetics technician; evaluate outcomes in the demonstration programs
	The educational preparation of the technician should be left at the associate degree level	
Informatics competencies and performance indicators	Clarify differences in use of technology and informatics knowledge and skills	Performance indicators reworded to reflect use of technology and informatics knowledge and skills
“Less Complex”	Phrase “less complex” needs to be defined	“less complex defined in standards and competencies
Food and Nutrition Practitioner	Title is confusing	Term “nutrition and dietetics technician” used
	Go back to use of nutrition and dietetics technician since this is the credential that is available for this graduate	
	“practitioner” sounds like a higher level than the dietitian; as nurse practitioner is higher than registered nurse	
Hours of supervised learning	Concern that the number of required hours of supervised learning is not specified	Continue to focus program on competency assessment and not specify hours; evaluate outcomes in the demonstration programs
	Glad the number of required hours of supervised learning was removed; allows programs more flexibility and focus is on student demonstration of competency	
Difference between bachelor’s and master’s prepared practitioners	Need greater clarify in the differences in the competencies for the bachelor’s and master’s degree	Competencies and performance indicators reviewed and revised to better clarify differences between graduates of each program

Table 4. Public comments related to Future Education Model Standards for Master’s Degree Programs and ACEND decision

<b>Comments</b>	<b>Examples of Comments</b>	<b>ACEND Decision</b>
Master’s degree for Nutrition and Dietetics Technician	This should be implemented as proposed	Rename the standards “graduate degree” to allow master’s and doctoral level programs; Continue with development of graduate degree standards with competencies designed to prepare dietitian nutritionists; evaluate outcomes in the demonstration programs
	The educational preparation of the RDN should be left at the bachelor’s degree level	
	Preparation of the RDN should move to the doctoral level	
Informatics competencies and performance indicators	Clarify differences in use of technology and informatics knowledge and skills	Performance indicators reworded to reflect use of technology and informatics knowledge and skills
Competencies and Performance Indicators	Some competencies and performance indicators are at too high or too low a level	Competencies and performance indicators were reviewed and revised to improve clarity; practice is expected to require higher level competencies in the future so those were retained
Hours of supervised learning	Concern that the number of required hours of supervised learning is not specified	Continue to focus program on competency assessment and not specify hours; evaluate outcomes in the demonstration programs
	Glad the number of required hours of supervised learning was removed; allows programs more flexibility and focus is on student demonstration of competency	
Difference between bachelor’s and master’s prepared practitioners	Need greater clarify in the differences in the competencies for the bachelor’s and master’s degree	Competencies and performance indicators reviewed and revised to better clarify differences between graduates of each program
Too many performance indicators	Too many performance indicators for programs to incorporate	Standards changes to allow programs to select which performance indicators to include

## **Appendix A**

### **Stakeholder Questionnaire on Revised Standards**

## GENERAL INFORMATION

The Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) has revised the draft *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards for Associate, Bachelor and Master Degree Programs in Nutrition and Dietetics* based on public comment received and is releasing the revised drafts for a second round of public comment. The revised drafts can be found at [www.eatrightPRO.org/ACEND](http://www.eatrightPRO.org/ACEND). Please complete this survey by April 28, 2017 to provide your input.

Key changes in the revised drafts of the Future Education Model Standards include:

- In Standard 1, the term "partnership" is defined as an option for program sponsorship.
- In Standard 1, qualifications for the director of the master degree program were changed to "Have earned a doctoral degree and have three years professional experience post credentialing or have earned a master degree and have five years professional experience post credentialing".
- In Standard 1, a specified program length was removed to reflect a focus on competency-based education.
- In Standard 4, the requirement that performance indicators be included on course syllabi was removed.
- In Standard 4, the learning experiences expected in bachelor and master degree programs were more clearly differentiated.
- In Standard 6, the academic degree requirement for faculty was changed to a master degree for master degree programs and sponsoring institution's criteria for appointment for associate and bachelor degree programs.
- The titles of the associate degree graduate was changed to a Nutrition Health Associate and the title for the bachelor degree graduate was changed to Food and Nutrition Practitioner.
- The number of competencies and performance indicators was reduced for each degree program.
- Clarification was provided in the competencies and performance indicators to better differentiate the expectations of the bachelor and master degree prepared practitioners in providing client/patient care.

Thank you for your input. If you have questions please email [ACEND@eatright.org](mailto:ACEND@eatright.org).

## Demographic Information

1. From what perspective will you be responding to this questionnaire? (please choose one perspective on which to base your response)

- Program Director
- Program Faculty Member
- Preceptor
- Student/Intern
- RDN/NDTR Practitioner
- Employer of RDNs/NDTRs
- Professional who works with RDNs/NDTRs
- Other (please specify)



**COMMENTS**

**ACEND encourages that you review the REVISED draft of the *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards* found at [www.eatrightPRO.org/ACEND](http://www.eatrightPRO.org/ACEND) prior to completing this survey.**

2. Please provide your comments on the REVISED *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards for Associate Degree Programs*.

**Please include reference to the specific standard, required element, competency or performance indicator in your comments.**

3. Please provide your comments on the REVISED *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards for Bachelor Degree Programs*.

**Please include reference to the specific standard, required element, competency or performance indicator in your comments.**

4. Please provide your comments on the REVISED *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards for Master Degree Programs*.

**Please include reference to the specific standard, required element, competency or performance indicator in your comments.**

**5. Additional Comments:**

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