

Messiah College Department of Nutrition and Dietetics

Guidelines for Observation in Food Service Management

Purpose

This required observation will familiarize the student with institutional food service management to provide background for NUTR 341: Food Service Operations

Effective Dates

Required observations must be completed by students taking NUTR 341: Food Service Operations Services in Fall 2008.

Guidelines

1. Three (3) hours of observation are to be done in a food service setting.
 - a. These observations and the observation reports must be completed prior to the beginning of NUTR 341: Food Service Operations.
 - b. The student is responsible for arranging the observations. Observations may be done in your home area or in the Grantham area but not in Messiah College Dining Services.
 - c. Discuss plans and ideas for observations with your instructor as early as possible.
 - d. Contact the organization where you would like to do your observation and obtain approval for you to spend time there. This should be done as far in advance of the actual observation as possible, at least several weeks in advance.
 - e. Obtain your instructor's approval when you have confirmed your observation sites. For each observation, provide your instructor with the name, title and address of your observation host or hostess. Your instructor will send a confirmation letter to this person.
 - f. Prepare observation report as described below. Observation reports will be considered as part of your grade for NUTR 341 Food Service Operations.

2. Food Service Setting
 - a. The food service management observation should be done under the direction of a registered dietitian (RD), registered dietetic technician (DTR), certified dietary manager (CDM), or manager with a Bachelor's degree in dietetics or food service management.
 - b. Institutional food service settings may include hospitals, long-term care facilities, schools, correctional facilities, or community based food services.
 - c. Complete the Food Service Management Observation Report (instructions attached) and give it to your instructor.

3. Professional Expectations
 - a. Arrive at your observation site on time.
 - b. Before you arrive, know the name and title of the person who will be your observation host or hostess and where you are to meet them.
 - c. Dress appropriately. When you make arrangements for your observation, check with your host or hostess about what you should wear. Many foodservice facilities have dress codes.
 - d. Within two days after the observation, write a note of thanks to your host or hostess. Be sure to use the correct spelling of the person's name and correct job title.

**Messiah College Nutrition and Dietetics Program
Food Service Management Observation Report**

Student Name _____

Observation Host or Hostess: Name _____
Professional Credentials _____
Job Title _____

Institution _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone _____

Date of Observation _____

Number of Hours Spent at Observation Site _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Host/Hostess Signature _____ Date _____

After the observation is completed, the student should prepare a typewritten report answering the following questions. Attach the report to this form and give to the course instructor on your first day of class.

- A. Document your activities during the visit. What did you observe, discuss, do, and for how long?
- B. Describe the organization where the food service is located: hospital, school, etc.
- C. Describe the hours and days of operation of the food service and the meals served each day (breakfast, lunch, dinner, other).
- D. How many employees work in the food service department? What are their working hours?
- E. Describe the department's customers: customer categories (e.g., patients, staff, students), and the approximate number of customers in each category served per meal or per day.
- F. For each customer category, indicate where they eat: dining room, cafeteria, snack bar, patient room, etc.
- G. Menus:
 - 1. Who plans the menus for the food service?
 - 2. What type of menu is used? (cycle menu, selective menu, restaurant-style menu)
 - 3. How are customer's food preferences considered by the menu planner?
 - 4. What other factors drive the menu? (cost, length of patient stay, etc.)
- H. List five pieces of equipment that you saw in the food service kitchen. For each piece, briefly describe what it is used for.
- I. Are Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) guidelines followed in food preparation? Describe.

- J. What technology is the department using to improve the level of quality, service, cost/effectiveness, etc?
Briefly describe uses of technology (computerized forecasting, purchasing, inventory management, recipe adjustment, nutrient analysis, hand-held menu collection devices, etc.)
- K. How does the department measure customer satisfaction?
- L. What are the main responsibilities of the person you observed? How does he or she spend their time on a typical day?
- M. What does the food service manager consider to be her or his biggest challenge?
- N. What else did you learn from your visit and observation?