



Nutrition and Dietetics  
Didactic Program  
Handbook

(Fall 2023)

Revised May 2023

*Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.*

*2 Timothy 2:15 (NIV)*

SHARPENING INTELLECT   DEEPENING CHRISTIAN FAITH   INSPIRING ACTION

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## WELCOME AND OVERVIEW

Welcome to the Messiah University Nutrition and Dietetics Major! We are glad you have chosen to join us as we seek to provide excellent nutrition care to individuals and communities. The Nutrition and Dietetics major opens the door to a variety of careers in food businesses, community health, and medical nutrition. Many nutrition jobs, especially those in health care, require an individual to be credentialed as a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN). To provide graduates with the most career options, the Messiah University Nutrition and Dietetics major has been approved/accredited by the Accreditation Counsel for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) for more than 40 years. Graduates who do not pursue the RDN credential are employable in food businesses and community health programs. With additional courses, the Nutrition and Dietetics major can also be used to prepare for other health care careers. (For more information about accreditation and the process for achieving the RDN credential see later sections of this manual.)

The purpose of this manual is to provide students with an efficient way to locate the policies, requirements and procedures of the Nutrition and Dietetics major. [The text that is in blue and underlined is a link. Press “control” and “click” simultaneously to use the link.](#) While we hope you will check this manual first when you have a procedural question, please don't let this manual replace conversations with your academic advisor and other nutrition and dietetics faculty. We are here to help you prepare for a successful career and achieve your goals, but we can't do that well unless we get to know you – so sign up for office hours and stop in for a chat!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A. B. P.' with a stylized flourish at the end.

## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

### MESSIAH UNIVERSITY NUTRITION AND DIETETICS DIDACTIC PROGRAM MISSION, GOALS, AND OUTCOME OBJECTIVES

**Mission:** to prepare students for supervised practice leading to eligibility for the Commission on Dietetic Registration credentialing exam to become a registered dietitian and for other careers related to food and nutrition. Graduates will serve and lead with excellence as they provide food and nutrition services grounded in current evidence and Biblical principles.

**Goal 1: Graduates will succeed in dietetic internships, graduate school or entry level jobs in nutrition and dietetics or related professional settings.**

Objective	Outcome (2021-23)
1.1 At least 80% of students complete program requirements within 3 years. (150% of planned program length) *	100%
1.2 At least 60% of program graduates apply for admission to a supervised practice program prior to or within 12 months of graduation.	92.6%
1.3 Of program graduates who apply to a supervised practice program, at least 80 % are admitted within 12 months of graduation.	100%
1.4 The program's one-year pass rate (graduates who pass the registration exam within one year of first attempt) on the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists is at least 80%.	100%
1.5 The overall preparation of at least 80% of graduates is rated as good or excellent by supervised practice program directors, graduate school advisors, or work supervisors.	100%
1.6 At least 80% of graduates are employed in a professional setting related to nutrition and dietetics or enrolled in a postgraduate education program one year after program completion.	100%

\*students progress into the last 2 years of the program after completing the prerequisite courses and meeting the GPA criteria.

**Goal 2: Graduates will demonstrate professional development, leadership, teamwork, and community service.**

Objective	Outcome (2021-23)
2.1 At least 75% of the graduates who complete the Senior Exit Survey rate the achievement of this goal as “Good” or “Excellent.”	93%
2.2 At least 80% of the graduates who complete the Alumni Survey rate the program’s achievement of this goal as “Good” or “Excellent.”	100%
2.3 At least 75% of graduates who complete the Alumni Survey report some form of continuing professional development (internship, graduate school, other professional certification, professional meetings, etc.).	93.3%
2.4 At least 80% of the employers, graduate school advisers, or internship directors who return the Alumni Supervisor Survey rate the commitment of graduates to professional development and leadership as “Good” or “Excellent.”	90%
2.5 At least 80% of the employers, graduate school advisers, or internship directors who return the Alumni Supervisor Survey rate commitment of graduates to teamwork and community service as “Good” or “Excellent”.	100%

ACCREDITATION



The Messiah University Nutrition and Dietetics Didactic Program in Dietetics is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics,  
 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190,  
 Chicago, IL 60606-6995, (312) 899-0040 ext. 5400  
<http://www.eatright.org/ACEND>

## THE MESSIAH UNIVERSITY NUTRITION AND DIETETICS MAJOR AND THE RDN AND NDTR CREDENTIALS

To earn the RDN credential an individual must complete a multi-step process:

1. Complete a minimum of a bachelor's degree at a college or university approved by the US Department of Education and course work that provides the core knowledge for the RDN through an ACEND-accredited Nutrition and Dietetics Didactic Program (DPD).
2. Complete an ACEND-accredited supervised practice program in dietetics and beginning January 1, 2024, at least a master's degree will also be required. Supervised practice programs provide a minimum of 1000 hours of supervised practice in professional settings designed to result in the competencies for the RDN in each of the three main areas of practice: Food Service, Community Health, and Clinical Nutrition. This typically takes 1 – 2 years on a full-time basis and involves tuition and fees. There are currently five options at this step:
  - Dietetic Internship (DI) – This option provides the supervised practice competencies for the RDN for those who have already earned a master's degree. Completion of a Nutrition and Dietetics Didactic Program is required to apply.
  - Combined Master's Degree and Dietetic Internship Program (MS/DI) – This option provides the supervised practice competencies for the RDN and a master's degree. Completion of a Nutrition and Dietetics Didactic Program is required to apply.
  - Coordinated program (CP) – This option provides both the core knowledge and the supervised practice competencies for the RDN and may result in a bachelor's degree or a master's degree. Requirements for starting these programs vary.
  - Individual Supervised Practice Program (ISPP) - This option is offered by some ACEND-accredited programs and includes individually planned experiences to meet the ACEND supervised practice competencies. Completion of a Nutrition and Dietetics Didactic Program is required to apply.
  - Future Education Model (FEM) Graduate Program – these programs provide both RDN knowledge and competencies at a graduate (master's or doctorate) level. Requirements for application vary but about half of the programs nationwide require completion of a DPD to apply.

3. Pass the national Registered Dietitian examination administered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR). Beginning January 1, 2024, the Commission on Dietetic Registration will require a master's degree to be eligible to take the exam.

The Messiah University Nutrition and Dietetics major curriculum is accredited by ACEND as a Nutrition and Dietetics Didactic Program (DPD) and enables students to complete the first step towards becoming a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist. Messiah University also offers an Academic Verification in Dietetics Program for individuals who already have at least a bachelor's degree and wish to complete DPD requirements only. Graduates of the Messiah University Nutrition and Dietetics Major and individuals who complete the Academic Verification in Dietetics program are eligible to apply to ACEND-accredited supervised practice programs/graduate programs (Step 2). After successful completion of a supervised practice program and at least a master's degree they are eligible to take the national RDN registration exam (Step 3).

Students in their senior year of the Messiah University Nutrition and Dietetics Didactic program are eligible to apply early to the Messiah University Master of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics/Dietetic Internship. This ACEND-accredited program, which begins in Summer 2023, allows students to complete their supervised practice hours and a master's degree in one year (full time) or two years (part time). Students who successfully complete the Master of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics/Dietetic Internship are eligible to take the national RDN exam.

Individuals who successfully complete the Messiah University Nutrition and Dietetics Didactic Program are also eligible to take the national nutrition and dietetics technician, registered (NDTR) exam. Individuals with the NDTR credential assist RDNs in health care, food service, and community health. The NDTR credential can be a good option for students who wish to gain more experience or boost their savings account prior to beginning a dietetic internship and master's degree.

For additional information on dietetics education contact ACEND at: Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190, Chicago, Illinois 60606-6995, (800) 877-1600, ext. 5400 <https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend>

## LICENSURE IN NUTRITION AND DIETETICS

Many states require a license to practice medical nutrition therapy. In the State of Pennsylvania, individuals who have earned the RDN or Clinical Nutrition Specialist (CNS) credential may apply to be licensed as dietitian-nutritionists (LDN). Although the LDN

license is not required to provide nutrition care in Pennsylvania, many employers require a state license. For a list of the licensure requirements for each US state please see <https://www.cdrnet.org/licensure>.

## COSTS AND FINANCIAL AID

### COSTS:

A summary of costs for tuition, fees, room and board, books and supplies can be found at the University [Tuition and Aid website](#). Information about specific fees for the current academic year is available by clicking on the “fees” link on the [Student Financial Services website](#).

The following courses in the Nutrition and Dietetics Major have lab fees. The current lab fee is \$65.00.

- NUTR 121 Food and Food Science
- NUTR 331 Advanced Food Science and Technology
- NUTR 341 Food Service
- NUTR 410 Nutrition Education and Counseling
- NUTR 412 Medical Nutrition Therapy II
- NUTR 425 Nutrient Metabolism and Research Methods I
- NUTR 426 Nutrient Metabolism and Research Methods II

### Other things you will need:

- Flat, closed-toe shoes will be needed for lab. This can be any closed toe shoe (not flip flops or sandals) but a sturdy non-slip shoe is best. You may wear shoes you already have. A reasonable budget for a sturdy closed toe shoe is \$30 – \$100.
- Apron: An apron which covers the chest and thighs is required for labs in which food is prepared. Most students find that they can borrow an apron from a relative or use a clean lab coat they have from another class. It is always fun to compare the vintage aprons students bring to lab. If you choose to buy a new apron plan on spending \$5 - \$15. Natural fibers or a poly-cotton blend are best. Avoid acrylic fibers which can melt when they get hot.
- Travel: Nutrition and Dietetics classes occasionally visit local food and nutrition institutions or businesses. Students are responsible for their own transportation

to these activities and typically travel together to reduce the cost. A reasonable estimate of transportation cost is \$5 – \$10 per academic year.

- Messiah University does not require students to bring their own computers. However, the online learning management system CANVAS is used to provide most course materials and for submitting course assignments and taking exams. The Office of Information Technology provides [recommended specifications for a personal computer](#) if you choose to bring one. Laptop costs vary widely – a reasonable budget is \$700- \$1000.

#### FINANCIAL AID:

Information about financial aid and scholarships can be found at the [Financial Aid website](#).

#### CALENDAR

The Messiah University Nutrition and Dietetics Didactic Program follows the University undergraduate calendar. Links to the University calendars for various years can be found [HERE](#).

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### APPLICATION

#### APPLICATION AND ADMISSION FOR THE NUTRITION AND DIETETICS MAJOR

The Nutrition and Dietetics major follows the university-wide policies and procedures for application and admission. This information can be found at the [Undergraduate Admissions website](#).

#### APPLICATION AND ADMISSION FOR THE ACADEMIC VERIFICATION IN DIETETICS PROGRAM

Students interested in this program must first have their transcripts evaluated by the Messiah University DPD Director. The fee for this evaluation is \$40.00. Students interested in beginning classes in the fall should request a transcript evaluation no later than March 1, and students interested in beginning classes in the spring semester should submit transcripts no later than October 1. Transcript evaluation requests received from April through August will typically be evaluated in September. To request a transcript evaluation please follow the directions below:

1. Have official transcripts from the school at which you received a Baccalaureate degree, as well as all transcripts documenting courses and grades you may have taken at other colleges or universities that might count towards the verification course requirements, sent to the Messiah Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) Director. All transcripts should be mailed or emailed directly from the college or university at which courses were taken to the DPD director at the following addresses: Director of the Didactic Program in Dietetics, Messiah University, One University Avenue, Suite 3030, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055; or [nutritionanddietetics@messiah.edu](mailto:nutritionanddietetics@messiah.edu).
2. Complete the [Academic Verification in Dietetics Transcript Evaluation Request Form](#) and submit it, along with the \$40.00 fee.
3. Upon receipt of the transcript evaluation request form and all transcripts, the DPD director will evaluate the transcripts against the [course requirements](#) for DPD verification at Messiah University. After the evaluation has been completed (typically about 2-3 weeks after all materials have been received), the DPD director will email or mail the results of the transcript review. Upon receiving the transcript review results, students interested in starting the program should contact the DPD director to set up an interview and course planning meeting.
4. If you have questions about this program, please contact the Messiah DPD director.

Director of the Didactic Program in Dietetics  
Messiah University  
One University Avenue, Suite 3030  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055  
[nutritionanddietetics@messiah.edu](mailto:nutritionanddietetics@messiah.edu)

## ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING/STUDENT PERFORMANCE MONITORING/REMEDICATION AND RETENTION

To provide excellent nutrition care, students need a thorough understanding of food and nutrition science, human behavior, and professional ethics as well as critical thinking and communication skills. The Messiah University Nutrition and Dietetics Didactic program employs a wide variety of strategies to assess and support student learning, to identify students who are at risk of being unable to successfully complete the program, and to provide students with strategies for improved performance or counsel regarding alternate career choices.

#### SUPPORT FOR STUDENT SUCCESS:

The transition to university-level education can be a challenge. To help students transition and progress successfully, students meet with their academic advisors at least once each semester to review student progress. In addition, the University provides a wide variety of support for both general study skills and specific courses. These resources are summarized at the [Academic Support website](#)

#### ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING:

Student learning is assessed by exams and assignments during and at the end of each course. Students should check exam and assignment scores in Canvas frequently and ask the course faculty member if they do not understand a particular score. When a student is struggling in a course, the course instructor will typically send an “Academic Alert” to the student and the student’s academic advisor. The purpose of these alerts is to notify students of problems early so that strategies for improved performance can be discussed and applied. If you receive an academic alert, don’t panic! Instead, please meet with the course professor and your advisor quickly to discuss how to improve your performance. Many of the upper-level nutrition and dietetics courses depend on knowledge and skill gained in prerequisite courses. Filling knowledge gaps and strengthening skills early in the curriculum will help you be successful later. Periodically, copies of student work will be saved to enable the program to document and improve the assessment of student learning.

#### EARLY REVIEW POLICY:

The following courses help to predict success in upper-level nutrition and dietetics courses:

**CHEM 105**

**CHEM 106**

**CHEM 204 or CHEM 309 and 310**

**BIOL 185 or BIOL 170**

**NUTR 121**

**NUTR 222**

Student grades will be reviewed at the completion of three of the courses on this list. Typically, this will happen after the first two semesters and include CHEM 105, CHEM

106, and NUTR 121. Students who have less than a 2.50 cumulative GPA after three classes (less than a 2.75 for students who transfer one of these classes in) or less than a C- in one of them will be on probation as far as progression in the major is concerned. Students on probation related to DPD progression should consider the possibility that their talents may not be the best fit for the nutrition and dietetics major and should discuss progression in the major as well as other career options with their academic advisor.

#### GPA REQUIREMENTS FOR PROGRESSION IN THE NUTRITION AND DIETETICS MAJOR:

This policy applies to students in the Nutrition and Dietetics major as well as to students in the non-degree academic verification in nutrition and dietetics program. Students who do not meet the progression criteria will be unable to complete the nutrition and dietetics major, though completing the food and nutrition minor will be a possibility for them.

To progress in the Messiah University Didactic Program in Dietetics (to take Medical Nutrition I, Nutrient Metabolism and Research Methods I, and Nutrition Education and Counseling) students need to have completed the following courses with no grades lower than a C- in each and with an average GPA of at least 2.50 in them. Ideally, these courses will be completed by the end of the third semester. Students who have transferred in more than one course from this list will need to have achieved an average GPA of at least 2.75 in them.

CHEM 105  
CHEM 106  
CHEM 204 or both CHEM 309 and 310  
BIOL 185 or BIOL 170  
NUTR 121  
NUTR 222

**Repeat Policy:** One course from the list of courses used to determine the progression GPA may be repeated one time. An attempt at a course will include all letter grades as well as W. Courses may be repeated at Messiah University or at other institutions. Courses taken at other institutions may be used to raise the progression GPA and on dietetic internship applications but will not influence a student's Messiah University GPA. Students receive credit for a course one time, so credits for repeated courses will not count towards the total number of credits needed for graduation. When extenuating circumstances arise (i.e. significant illness or death in the family), students may appeal this policy by submitting a written letter explaining the rationale for the

exception to the DPD Director. If the appeal is denied, the decision may be appealed to the dean of the School of Science, Engineering, and Health.

#### ASSESSMENT AND REMEDIATION FOR ACEND CORE KNOWLEDGE FOR THE REGISTERED DIETITIAN NUTRITIONIST (KRDN)

In addition to meeting graduation requirements or academic verification in dietetics requirements (for students who already have a bachelor's degree), students who wish to apply to ACEND-accredited supervised practice programs or graduate programs or to take the Nutrition and Dietetics Technician, Registered Examination will also need to demonstrate that they are proficient in each aspect of the ACEND core knowledge for the Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (KRDN) to earn a verification statement.

A Verification Statement is an official document that signifies that an individual has completed the requirements of a nutrition and dietetics program accredited by the Accreditation Council in Education for Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND). Verification Statements are required for dietetic internships and eligibility for the Nutrition and Dietetics Technicians, Registered exam and may be needed for graduate programs, state licensure, and potential employers.

To receive a Verification Statement, students must earn a 75% or higher on assignments tied to the ACEND core knowledge requirements (KRDNs) in major courses at the Mastery level. Assignments that address each ACEND KRDN are embedded in the nutrition and dietetics major courses.

Nutrition and Dietetics course syllabi list the ACEND core knowledge requirements (KRDNs) that are being assessed at an introductory, developmental, or mastery level. Students who do not meet a KRDN being assessed at the introductory or developmental level will be notified by their course instructor who will provide strategies for improved performance in the future. When a KRDN is being assessed at a mastery level within a course, students are expected to demonstrate proficient or advanced performance. In the event a student does not achieve proficient or advanced performance the student must remediate the assignment until they have achieved at least proficient performance. Remediation plans are at the discretion of the professor teaching the course. Remediating a KRDN will not change the grade for the assignment.

#### BACKGROUND CHECKS AND DRUG TESTING

The Messiah University Nutrition and Dietetics major does not require students to participate in activities which require background checks or drug testing. However, some students opt to volunteer or complete internships at agencies which require background checks, clearances, drug testing or a physical examination. If an agency requires a background check, the student will be responsible for making requests to the appropriate agencies or authorities, transmitting the results of the background check to the agency, and for any costs associated with these requests. Students are advised to plan so that adequate time for the processing of these requests is provided for.

## COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS

### GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (B.S. IN NUTRITION AND DIETETICS)

Graduation requirements for students earning a bachelor's degree at Messiah University are found in the university catalog. The catalog in effect the year a student begins taking classes at Messiah University typically determines the graduation requirements. [General Graduation Requirements](#) for a bachelor's degree can be found in the Academic Policies section of the University Catalog and requirements for the [Nutrition and Dietetics \(B. S.\)](#) can be found under Programs of Study.

### COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ACADEMIC VERIFICATION IN DIETETICS PROGRAM (FOR STUDENTS WHO ALREADY HAVE A BACHELOR'S DEGREE)

1. Complete the [Major Courses for the Nutrition and Dietetics major](#) as listed in the Messiah University Catalog with a GPA in them of at least 2.0.
2. Earn a 75% or higher on assignments tied to the ACEND core knowledge requirements (KRDNs) in major courses at the Mastery level. (See Verification Statement Policy and Procedures).
3. Complete at least 18 credits at Messiah University.
4. Complete all NUTR courses at the 300 and 400 level no more than 6 years prior to program completion.

## CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

Students are encouraged to discuss concerns about faculty or class procedures directly with the individual involved. However, we recognize that this is not always possible due to concerns about retaliation. If this is a concern, students are encouraged to bring

their concerns to the chair of the Department of Health, Nutrition and Exercise Science or to the Dean of the School of Science, Engineering, and Health. The Messiah University policy for grade appeals is found in the [student handbook](#).

Students are encouraged to discuss concerns about Nutrition and Dietetics Didactic Program policies and procedures and/or ACEND accreditation standards with their academic adviser. If the concern is not addressed to the student's satisfaction, the student should submit a written explanation of the concern or complaint to the DPD Director. The student and DPD director will meet to discuss the matter, and the results of the meeting will be documented, and copies provided to the student. If the concern cannot be resolved, the student and DPD Director will meet with the Chair of the Department of Health, Nutrition, and Exercise Science (HNES). If the concern cannot be resolved at the department level the student and HNES chair will meet with the Dean of the School of Science, Engineering, and Health.

Students should submit unresolved complaints related to ACEND standards in writing to the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND, [acend@eatright.org](mailto:acend@eatright.org)) only after all program and institutional options have been exhausted.

## COURSE ATTENDANCE AND ASSIGNMENT POLICIES

### COURSE ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR THE NUTRITION AND DIETETICS MAJOR

The Messiah University [Student Handbook](#) states that punctual and regular attendance at classes is expected except when a student is prevented from doing so by illness, death in the family, or a similar emergency. The specific policy for class attendance and completion of assignments for courses in the Nutrition and Dietetics Major is as follows:

Although there is no formal participation grade in this course, students are expected to attend each class meeting in-person. Attendance is the responsibility of the student. Students are expected to make every effort to attend class (weather and health permitting). If you know in advance that you are going to miss a class because of a personal commitment (such as a wedding) on a day when an exam is scheduled or an assignment is due, you must inform the instructor two weeks prior to your absence. Assignments are expected to be handed in in advance. Make-up exams and labs will be considered by the instructor on an individual basis.

When you do not attend class, you may access on Canvas course materials relevant to the material covered in class. The instructor recommends that you confer with others in the course about what you missed (class discussion, class period activities) and you are

welcome to confer with the instructor during office hours. Faculty will **not** be facilitating synchronous Zoom access to class or asynchronous class recordings.

#### ASSIGNMENT POLICY FOR THE NUTRITION AND DIETETICS MAJOR

Unless the class schedule indicates otherwise, assignments are due at the start of class. Assignments turned in on the day they are due but after the time they are due will lose 5% of the grade. Assignments turned in after the day they are due will receive a penalty of 10% of the grade for each day late (not counting weekends).

#### COURSE SCHEDULING

Many courses in the Nutrition and Dietetics major have required prerequisites. In addition, several the junior-senior level courses are offered every other year. Course prerequisites and scheduling (i.e., fall only, spring only, semester taught if every other year) are listed in the course catalog. In addition, course scheduling templates are available on the Nutrition and Dietetics website. Careful attention to course planning is necessary to ensure that all required courses can be completed on time.

The class schedule for a given semester is generally provided to students a few weeks before class registration begins. Once the class schedule has been released, students should schedule an appointment with their academic adviser. Students should use the DegreeWorks software as well as the course scheduling templates and the class schedule to create a tentative class schedule and bring these materials to the advising appointment. Students who do not bring these materials to their advising appointments will be asked to reschedule. At the appointment course progress and the semester plan will be reviewed. Registration advising appointments are required to sign up for classes.

#### CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING (TRANSFER COURSES, CREDIT BY EXAMINATION, CREDIT FOR PRIOR EXPERIENCE)

##### TRANSFER COURSES:

The university policies for transfer courses can be found at the [Registrar's Office website](#). Procedures for transfer courses and a list of pre-approved transfer courses can be found in the "Transfer Course Equivalencies Database" accessible through the [Transfer Connection](#) website. Transfer equivalencies for courses which are not listed on

this web site are assigned on an individual basis through the Registrar's office. Students should save their course syllabi to facilitate this process.

Students transferring from other institutions to Messiah University should plan to meet with the Director of the Nutrition and Dietetics Didactic program after they are accepted to review how their prior coursework has transferred and to plan a class schedule. Nutrition is a rapidly changing field; therefore, foods and nutrition courses taken more than 5 years prior to entering the Messiah University Nutrition and Dietetics Major generally will not transfer.

Messiah University students who wish to take courses elsewhere should first check the transfer course equivalency database on the registrar's web page to determine if the course is pre-approved. If the course is not there, obtain a transfer course approval form from the registrar's office and be sure that the course is approved before it is taken. For courses in the nutrition and dietetics major, complete the form, attach the course description (from the school website) to it, and give it to your adviser. Remember that to obtain a degree from Messiah University, students must take their last 30 credits, and last 12 credits in the major, at Messiah University.

#### CREDIT BY EXAMINATION:

The Messiah University policies for credit by examination (AP, CLEP, IB, DSST) are found at the [Registrar's Office website](#).

#### CREDIT FOR PRIOR EXPERIENCE:

The Department of Health, Nutrition and Exercise Science does not offer academic credit for volunteer or work experience.

#### DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Messiah University is committed to diversity, inclusiveness, intercultural learning and reconciliation. This aspect of a Messiah University Education is vital for preparing nutrition and dietetics practitioners who can provide effective care for diverse individuals and groups. Students in the Nutrition and Dietetics major are expected to adhere to the following university-wide policies and procedures found in the [Student Handbook](#):

- Diversity Statement (page 28)

- Inclusive Language Policy (page 29)
- Sexuality and Relationships (page 36)
- Interpersonal Violence and Sexual Misconduct (page 38)
- Hazing (page 55)
- Respect for the Rights of Others (page 63)

Students who are victims of interpersonal violence, harassment, sexual assault and/or stalking should follow the procedures on page 40 of the student handbook.

#### ETHICS/DISCIPLINE/DISMISSAL:

Nutrition and Dietetics majors are expected to demonstrate honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits and to treat all people with care and respect. The Messiah University Nutrition and Dietetics major follows the University-wide [Code of Conduct](#). Procedures for addressing academic and other forms of misconduct are found in the [Student Handbook](#). Academic dishonesty and behavior which receives formal university sanctions is reported to academic advisors and may be reflected in recommendations for supervised practice, graduate school, or employment. Significant or repeated violations of university policy may result in dismissal from the university. In addition, Nutrition and Dietetics majors should be aware that most health care organizations have strict policies for professional behavior and ethics. Behaviors that have legal consequences may disqualify an individual from pursuing supervised practice in dietetics or employment in health care.

#### FOODS LAB USE POLICY

The Foods Laboratory located in Jordan 63 is an academic facility used primarily by the Nutrition and Dietetics Didactic Program. The laboratory is equipped with kitchen appliances and tools that are used for food preparation and experimentation in Nutrition (NUTR) courses. A primary concern is to maintain the security of the laboratory and to ensure that the equipment is used appropriately and with care. Any use of the Foods Laboratory, including the appliances and other equipment, for purposes other than NUTR courses must be approved by the Director of the Didactic Program in Dietetics.

During any use of the Foods Lab, a NUTR faculty member or student Lab Assistant must be present. The following are situations when the use of the Foods Laboratory **may** be approved.

- A single session(s) of a Messiah University course involving an educational food-related activity.
- Non-credit foods classes for Messiah University students and/or staff.
- School of Science, Engineering, and Health (SEH) social activities (such as the Christmas Happening).

Food Laboratory use for the following purposes will not be approved:

- Food preparation by groups for purposes not listed above.
- Social gatherings that do not involve an educational component (except those sponsored by SEH)
- Preparation and storage of personal food (except with permission of a Nutrition and Dietetics faculty member).

## FOOD TASTING POLICY

To be effective, foods and nutrition professionals need to be involved in the taste testing of a wide variety of foods. Accordingly, individuals studying to be foods and nutrition professionals need to taste small amounts of many foods as they learn the knowledge and skills they will need to serve others. Students in Messiah University classes that are part of the Nutrition and Dietetics major or the Foods and Nutrition minor are encouraged to set aside their personal preferences and taste small amounts of foods to be evaluated for class assignments. Students with medical (for example a medically documented eating disorder, food intolerance or food allergy) or religious (for example avoidance of meat on Friday) food restrictions should discuss their food restrictions with their instructor during the first week of the semester.

## HEALTH SERVICES AND COUNSELING

The [Engle Center for Counseling and Health Services](#) provides Messiah University students with resources for meeting physical and mental health needs.

## HONORS IN NUTRITION AND DIETETICS

The purpose of the Honors work is to provide outstanding students with an opportunity to pursue an in-depth investigation within a limited area of study. All nutrition and dietetics majors are required to demonstrate basic skills in finding, interpreting, and applying scientific evidence relevant to nutrition and dietetics practice. Students pursuing the RDN credential will build on these skills in the Master's Degree/Dietetic Internship part of credentialing requirements. The size and breadth of the nutrition and dietetics curriculum makes devoting significant amounts of time to more focused work very challenging; however, exceptional students interested in research careers may wish to add additional research experience to what is required in the major. While students in the University Honors Program may use Department Honors to fulfill the senior year requirement for the Honors Program, most Nutrition and Dietetics majors in the Honors program find that the Senior Honors Seminar is a better fit than an Honors Research Project. Students who are not in the University Honors Program may also apply to participate in research projects for Department Honors if they meet the criteria.

### ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION

Students interested in pursuing honors research should discuss the process with their academic advisor at the start of the fall term of their junior year. The discussion should include eligibility criteria, areas of interest, and possible research mentors. A research mentor must be a Messiah University faculty member willing to support the relevance of the project and the student's readiness to successfully complete the project. For Department Honors the research mentor must be a faculty member in the HNES department. Faculty research mentors provide guidance to students as they work on their project but are not expected to do any of the project work. During the remainder of the fall term, students should discuss project ideas with their research mentor and any additional Messiah faculty or off campus faculty or professionals who might be involved in the project.

Students will apply for honors research during the spring semester of their junior year. Criteria for applying are:

- Candidates must have demonstrated honesty and integrity in their academic work and interpersonal relationships.
- Candidates must have completed Statistics (STAT 269).
- Cumulative GPA of at least 3.50 and Major GPA of at least 3.80 at the start of the spring of the junior year, which must be maintained at the end of the junior year.

- A Messiah University faculty member willing and able to serve as a faculty research mentor.

For HNES Department Honors, applicants and their research mentor must submit the proposal to the HNES Department Chair to initiate the department review process. For the Messiah University Honors Program, applicants must obtain approval from the Messiah University Honors Program Director prior to submitting the paperwork for departmental review/approval. Please see the Messiah University Honors Program website for more information.

An application to begin an honors project must be submitted by the Friday prior to Spring Break of the junior year. This application should include a cover letter, research proposal, and letter of support from a faculty research mentor. The cover letter should indicate the rationale and purposes for pursuing departmental honors, noting specifically how it relates to one's career goals. The research proposal must be developed with the faculty mentor and can be an extension of an ongoing project or follow a common interest between the student and faculty mentor.

Students in the University Honors program should submit their proposal to the Honors program after departmental approval. Students are responsible for completing the appropriate on-line paperwork with the Messiah University Registrar's Office.

#### PROJECT COMPLETION

If the student's honors research project proposal is accepted, the student completes the project during their senior year. Students register for a total of 4 – 6 credit hours spread out over two semesters. Three hours of work each week are expected for each semester credit hour. The student will take 2 – 3 credits of NUTR 497 during the fall semester. The student's work must merit a grade of A or B to receive academic credit and a grade of A is required to continue in the honors program. In NUTR 497 the student will complete a literature review, comprehensive research proposal and Institutional approval to conduct research.

If the student earns a grade of A for the fall work, the student may enroll in 2 – 3 credits of NUTR 498. The student's spring work must merit a grade of A or B to receive academic credit. If the student earns a grade of A in NUTR 498 and has maintained a major GPA of at least 3.5, the student will receive Department Honors at graduation. If a student does not earn an A for the fall work, the student may enroll, with the support of the research mentor, in NUTR 422 to complete the project, but the student will not receive department honors. In NUTR 497 (or NUTR 422), the student will complete data collection and analysis and an oral presentation of results. At least once during the research project, the student must present an oral presentation at the institutional

research symposium sponsored by the School of Science, Engineering and Health, professional conference and/or other venue selected by the Department of Health, Nutrition, and Exercise Science.

## INTENT TO COMPLETE FORM

Students applying to dietetic internships before they have completed graduation or DPD requirements will be required to submit an “Intent to Complete” form as a part of their dietetic internship application. Students needing these forms should send an e-mail or written memo requesting this form to the DPD Director at the end of the fall semester for the spring match, and at the end of spring semester for the fall match. If a student is using the online Dietetic Inclusive Centralized Application Services (DICAS) to apply to supervised practice programs, the intent to complete form will be completed through this system.

## LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Medical leave is available for students who due to documented serious physical or psychological illness, need to leave the university during the semester without completing their coursework or to withdraw from the university for no longer than two consecutive semesters. The Messiah University Policy for medical leave is found in the [Student Handbook](#).

## OFF-CAMPUS ACTIVITIES RELATED TO NUTRITION AND DIETETICS

Nutrition and dietetics majors participate in both required and volunteer off-campus activities related to nutrition and dietetics. The following guidelines clarify the roles of faculty and students in these valuable experiences.

## TRANSPORTATION

Occasionally students are required to travel to off campus locations for upper-level course-related experiences. When this occurs, students are expected to provide their own transportation. When a student does not have their own transportation, faculty

will facilitate car-pooling if possible or try to find a substitute experience on campus. Messiah University and the Department of Health, Nutrition, and Exercise Science are not responsible to provide transportation to off-campus activities and are not liable for any personal injury, accident, or financial loss suffered by the student while traveling. Students will not be reimbursed by the university or department for traveling expenses related to course or volunteer activities.

#### LIABILITY AND HEALTH INSURANCE

The University maintains liability insurance for off campus activities required for Messiah University courses. Students need to provide their own health insurance and are responsible for any and all medical costs incurred as a result of off campus activities.

#### DRESS

Standards for professional dress vary widely in nutrition and dietetics practice. In general, students should inquire about appropriate dress for the agency or institution they will be visiting.

#### INJURY OR ILLNESS

If a student is injured or becomes ill during an off-campus experience, they should promptly notify their off-campus supervisor as well as their Messiah University faculty supervisor or academic advisor.

#### EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE OF PRACTICA AND INTERNSHIPS

Students in the Nutrition and Dietetics major may choose to register for off-campus practica or internships through the Career and Professional Development Center. These experiences are taken for academic credit, but are not ACEND-accredited supervised practice experiences. The purpose of these experiences is to promote the development of the student. Students are not yet fully ready to assume the duties of a practicing professional and should not be used to replace employees. If a student is concerned that their internship activities are replacing an employee, the student should alert their academic advisor and the Messiah University Internship Center.

## ONLINE EXAMINATIONS

Some nutrition and dietetics examinations are administered through Canvas, the university online learning management system. With the exception of students with formal testing accommodations, students are expected to take exams during the scheduled class period, in the course classroom. Students with testing accommodations through the Office of Academic Accessibility (OAA) should notify their instructor at least one week prior to the exam so that the exam can be provided to the OAA.

## PRIVACY AND ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS

The university policy for the privacy of student information and access to student records can be found at the [Registrar's Office FERPA website](#).

## RECOMMENDATION LETTERS

### GENERAL GUIDELINES

These guidelines apply to all types of recommendations. Please follow these as well as the guidelines for specific types of recommendations found on the following pages.

1. Ask first: Ask each recommender if they would feel comfortable writing you a strong letter of recommendation. If recommendations may be provided either electronically or on paper, ask which type of form your recommender prefers. Please ask even if you are just including a person's name on a job application form. Messiah nutrition and dietetics faculty will not provide a recommendation unless you have notified them that you have used their name.
2. Pay attention to the type of recommenders the program requires (Some require recommendations from professors or supervisors in specific areas).
3. Allow your recommender adequate time. Provide your recommenders with the necessary information a minimum of two - three weeks before you need the completed recommendation. Be aware that university faculty are generally not on contract during the summer break and plan accordingly.
4. Organize the information the recommender needs to write you a strong recommendation and provide it to the individual writing your recommendation: purpose of recommendation, specific information requested, date needed, person to send the recommendation to, and any other important directions. Many

recommendation forms ask about your organization ability. Treat the request as an opportunity to demonstrate how well organized you are.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DIETETIC INTERNSHIPS AND GRADUATE SCHOOLS

Many schools and programs require completion of a specific recommendation form.

1. Please follow the general directions section above. Prepare **one** typed request in memo form that gives the names of the programs to which you are applying and specific instructions on how the recommendations are to be done for each program. Include your resume (and for Messiah University faculty your application essay) with your memo. The memo can be provided in paper or e-mail.

*Please note – The essay you submit with your internship memo does not need to be your final draft, but it should be an example of your best writing. Messiah faculty are happy to provide assistance with internship essays in December and January, but not February. If you want assistance with your essay from a Messiah faculty member, please schedule an appointment in the first half of January so that follow up meetings can occur later in the month if needed.*

If your plans change after you submit your memo, provide your recommender with a revised memo. If you submitted your initial memo, resume, etc. in an e-mail, attach your resume and all other supporting documents to the revised memo e-mail so your recommender does not have to go hunting through e-mails to find all of your information.

For spring applications, this should generally be done by the beginning of the January term. However, many programs are moving their deadlines earlier, so check each program you are interested in and be sure to give your recommenders adequate time. (Since some programs hold open houses in January, faculty can be somewhat flexible here, but due to the number of recommendations which need to be written it is unrealistic to expect a faculty member to complete a packet for you in a week or two.) The memo should include the following:

- Specify if the recommendation form or letter must be electronic or paper. For paper forms, indicate whether the original is required or if a photocopy is OK. Note: Even if a photocopy is used, your recommender should sign each form with an original signature using colored, not black, ink.
- Indicate if a separate letter is required in addition to a form.
- State whether the recommendation is to be completed online, should be returned to you or mailed directly to the program. If it should be mailed directly

to the program, be sure to include the mailing address, including the department or person to whom the recommendation should be addressed. If it is a paper form, indicate whether the recommendation should be in a sealed envelope with the writer's signature across the seal.

- Include the deadline when the recommendations should be completed.

2. If you e-mail your recommenders an electronic copy of the form you usually still need to type in your name (and any other information you need to provide such as the program you are applying to or your address).

Many forms – including the Dietetic Internship Recommendation form – require that you sign a form indicating your preferences regarding confidentiality. Be sure that you take care of this before you provide forms to your recommenders. If you need to use a paper copy of an internship recommendation, give each recommender a copy of the confidentiality page with your name and graduation date typed in and the form signed in blue ink.

3. In many cases it will be helpful to meet with your recommender to discuss your interests, strengths, and weaknesses.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDY ABROAD, CROSS CULTURAL TRIPS, AND SCHOLARSHIPS

1. Please follow the general directions for requesting recommendations provided above. Prepare a typed request in memo form that details the following:

- The name and address of the agency/program/organization to which you are applying. If possible, also provide the name and credentials of the person the letter should be addressed to. (In general, a letter to a specific person will make a better impression than one addressed to "To whom it may concern".)
- If traveling, include a summary about why you are interested in travel to this particular location.
- Include a copy of your resume which lists your current GPA. In many cases it will be helpful to meet with your letter writer to discuss your interests, strengths, and weaknesses.
- Specific instructions on how the recommendations are to be done such as:
  - Indicate if a separate letter is required in addition to a form provided by the program.

- State whether the recommendation should be in a sealed envelope with the writer's signature across the seal.
- State whether the recommendation should be returned to you or mailed directly to the program. If it should be mailed directly to the program, be sure to include the mailing address, including the department or person to whom the recommendation should be addressed.
- Include the deadline when the recommendations should be returned to you or to the program.

2. If the program has a recommendation form, fill out the information you need to provide. If you need to sign the form do so in blue ink (not black). Many forms require that you sign a form indicating your preferences regarding confidentiality. Be sure that you take care of this before you give forms to your recommenders.

Some forms are available electronically or may be completed interactively on the web. If forms are involved, ask your recommender if they prefer to receive a paper copy of the form or if you should e-mail them an electronic copy. Do not send your recommender a web link and expect them to search for information.

If you e-mail your recommenders an electronic copy of the form you still need to type in your name (and any other information you need to provide such as the program you are applying to or your address).

3. If your letter writer is a faculty member at Messiah University, the faculty member will provide a university stationary envelope. If your letter writer is off campus you should provide him/her with both an envelope (with the address or institution name typed in) and the appropriate postage.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR JOBS

1. Please note the general directions for requesting recommendations provided above. Prepare a typed request in memo form that details the following for each letter:

- The name and address of the employer. If possible, also provide the name and credentials of the person the letter should be addressed to. (In general, a letter to a specific person will make a better impression than one addressed to "To whom it may concern").
- The job position and responsibilities
- The due date for the letter.

2. If the employer has a recommendation form type the information you need to provide. If you need to sign the form do so in blue ink (not black).

3. Give your recommenders a copy of your resume. In many cases it will be helpful to meet with them to discuss your interests, strengths, and weaknesses.
4. If your letter writer is a faculty member at Messiah University, the faculty member will provide you with a university stationary envelope. If your letter writer is off campus, you should provide them with both an envelope (with the address typed in) and the appropriate postage.

## STUDY ABROAD

We highly recommend gaining a more international perspective while you are a student at Messiah University. There are several ways to do this. Some students study abroad for a semester, and others take a May term cross cultural study course. Because upper-level nutrition and dietetics courses are typically not offered in semester long study abroad programs, the May term opportunities are easier for nutrition and dietetics majors to participate in. Most students who wish to spend a semester abroad need to do so in the spring of the sophomore year, so it is important to plan early. Students who wish to spend a semester abroad should discuss course scheduling options with their adviser during the fall of their first year.

## VERIFICATION STATEMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

In addition to meeting graduation requirements or academic verification in dietetics requirements (for students who already have a bachelor's degree), students who wish to apply to ACEND-accredited supervised practice programs or graduate programs or to take the Nutrition and Dietetics Technician, Registered Examination will also need to demonstrate that they are proficient in each aspect of the ACEND core knowledge for the Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (KRDN) in order to earn a Verification Statement.

A Verification Statement is an official document that signifies that an individual has completed the requirements of a nutrition and dietetics program accredited by the Accreditation Council in Education for Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND). Verification Statements are required for dietetic internships and eligibility for the Nutrition and Dietetics Technicians, Registered exam and may be needed for graduate programs, state licensure, and potential employers.

## VERIFICATION STATEMENT POLICY

To receive a Verification Statement, students must earn a 75% or higher on assignments tied to the ACEND core knowledge requirements (KRDNs) in major courses at the Mastery level.

Assignments that address each ACEND KRDN are embedded in the nutrition and dietetics major courses.

The ACEND KRDNs are listed below:

### **Domain 1. Scientific and Evidence Base of Practice: Integration of scientific information and translation of research into practice.**

KRDN 1.1: Demonstrate how to locate, interpret, evaluate and use professional literature to make ethical, evidence-based practice decisions.

KRDN 1.2: Select and use appropriate current information technologies to locate and apply evidence-based guidelines and protocols.

KRDN 1.3: Apply critical thinking skills.

### **Domain 2. Professional Practice Expectations: Beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviors for the nutrition and dietetics practitioner level of practice.**

KRDN 2.1: Demonstrate effective and professional oral and written communication and documentation.

KRDN 2.2: Describe the governance of nutrition and dietetics practice, such as the Scope of Practice for the Registered Dietitian Nutritionist and the Code of Ethics for the Profession of Nutrition and Dietetics.

KRDN 2.3: Assess the impact of a public policy position on nutrition and dietetics practice.

KRDN 2.4: Discuss the impact of health care policy and different health care delivery systems on food and nutrition services.

KRDN 2.5: Identify and describe the work of interprofessional teams and the roles of others with whom the registered dietitian nutritionist collaborates.

KRDN 2.6: Demonstrate cultural humility, awareness of personal biases and an understanding of cultural differences as they contribute to diversity, equity and inclusion.

KRDN 2.7: Describe contributing factors to health inequity in nutrition and dietetics including structural bias, social inequities, health disparities and discrimination.

KRDN 2.8: Participate in a nutrition and dietetics professional organization and explain the significant role of the organization.

KRDN 2.9: Defend a position on issues impacting the nutrition and dietetics profession.

**Domain 3. Clinical and Client Services: Development and delivery of information, products and services to individuals, groups and populations.**

KRDN 3.1: Use the Nutrition Care Process and clinical workflow elements to assess nutritional parameters, diagnose nutrition related problems, determine appropriate nutrition interventions and develop plans to monitor the effectiveness of these interventions.

KRDN 3.2: Develop an educational session or program/educational strategy for a target population.

KRDN 3.3: Demonstrate counseling and education methods to facilitate behavior change and enhance wellness for diverse individuals and groups.

KRDN 3.4: Practice routine health screening assessments, including measuring blood pressure and conducting waived point-of-care laboratory testing (such as blood glucose or cholesterol).

KRDN 3.5: Describe concepts of nutritional genomics and how they relate to medical nutrition therapy, health and disease.

KRDN 3.6: Develop nutritionally sound meals, menus and meal plans that promote health and disease management and meet client's/patient's needs.

**Domain 4. Practice Management and Use of Resources: Strategic application of principles of management and systems in the provision of services to individuals and organizations.**

KRDN 4.1: Apply management theories to the development of programs or services.

KRDN 4.2: Evaluate a budget/financial management plan and interpret financial data.

KRDN 4.3: Demonstrate an understanding of the regulation system related to billing and coding, what services are reimbursable by third party payers, and how reimbursement may be obtained.

KRDN 4.4: Apply the principles of human resource management to different situations.

KRDN 4.5: Apply safety and sanitation principles related to food, personnel and consumers.

KRDN 4.6: Explain the processes involved in delivering quality food and nutrition services.

KRDN 4.7: Evaluate data to be used in decision-making for continuous quality improvement.

**Domain 5. Leadership and Career Management: Skills, strengths, knowledge and experience relevant to leadership potential and professional growth for the nutrition and dietetics practitioner.**

KRDN 5.1: Perform self-assessment that includes awareness in terms of learning and leadership styles and cultural orientation and develop goals for self-improvement.

KRDN 5.2: Identify and articulate one's skills, strengths, knowledge and experiences relevant to the position desired and career goals.

KRDN 5.3: Practice how to self-advocate for opportunities in a variety of settings (such as asking for needed support, presenting an elevator pitch).

KRDN 5.4: Practice resolving differences or dealing with conflict.

KRDN 5.5: Promote team involvement and recognize the skills of each member.

KRDN 5.6: Demonstrate an understanding of the importance and expectations of a professional in mentoring and precepting others.

Nutrition and Dietetics course syllabi list the ACEND core knowledge requirements (KRDNs) that are being assessed at an introductory, developmental, or mastery level. Students who do not meet a KRDN being assessed at the introductory or developmental level will be notified by their course instructor who will provide strategies for improved performance in the future. When a KRDN is being assessed at a mastery level within a course, students are expected to demonstrate proficient or advanced performance. In the event a student does not achieve proficient or advanced performance the student must remediate the assignment until they have achieved at least proficient performance. Remediation plans are at the discretion of the professor teaching the course. Remediating a KRDN will not change the grade for the assignment. The maximum amount of time allowed for completing program requirements after starting NUTR courses at the 300 level is 6 years.

#### PROCEDURE FOR ISSUING VERIFICATION STATEMENTS:

1. DPD Verification statements, per ACEND requirements, will be issued after the following are met:
  - a. The DPD director has confirmed that the student has earned a 75% or higher on assignments tied to the ACEND KRDN student learning outcomes at the Mastery Level.
  - b. The University registrar has confirmed completion of bachelor's degree requirements OR the DPD Director has confirmed completion of Academic Verification in Dietetics program course requirements.
2. The DPD director will send 6 copies of the ACEND DPD verification statement form to each graduate within 6 weeks after confirmation of all course requirements is verified by the University Registrar.

3. One official original copy of the Verification Statement will be kept on record indefinitely at Messiah University; however, it is important that the student keep an original Verification Statement in their files to use in various application processes, such as preparing for professional membership or dietetic registration.

#### WITHDRAWALS AND REFUNDS

The university policy for withdrawals and refunds can be found at [Financial Aid website](#).

