Individualized Supervised Practice Pathway (ISPP) Policy
Virginia Tech Internship Program in Nutrition and Dietetics

Mission
The mission of the Virginia Tech Individualized Supervised Practice Pathway (ISPP) in Nutrition and Dietetics is to prepare confident, competent entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists who can balance evidence-based practice with client-centered care.

Program Goals
1. Prepare interns for effective professional practice.
2. Position interns to function successfully in a rapidly changing professional dietetics/nutrition environment.
3. Prepare graduates to be leaders within the dietetics/nutrition profession.

Program Overview
The ISPP follows the curriculum of Virginia Tech’s Internship Program in Nutrition and Dietetics in the Department of Human Nutrition Foods, Nutrition, and Exercise (HNFE). ISPP interns follow the Virginia Tech Internship Program in Nutrition and Dietetics Policy and Procedures with exceptions identified in this document. Interns completing the ISPP will achieve the competencies identified in the Accreditation Standards for Internship Programs in Nutrition and Dietetics (2017) established by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND). Upon successful completion of the program, interns will be eligible to complete the registration examination for dietitians offered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration.

Interns complete 1200 or more hours of Supervised Practice (SP) in Clinical/Medical Nutrition Therapy, Community, and Management of Food and Nutrition Services. The program emphasis of Leadership and Professional Development is interspersed throughout the SP rotations, projects, and assignments. Before beginning the program, interns will provide evidence through a professional portfolio of any competencies already met. The director will determine if and how to award credit for those competencies to result in a reduced number of SP hours required during the internship. Interns are encouraged to submit research hours to replace the 8-day elective rotation.

ISPP interns are allowed a total of 2 years to complete the program. Interns are expected to participate in classes and supervised practice in one of the two program regions (Northern Virginia or Blacksburg). Whereas interns in the traditional VT program complete full-time work weeks (4 days on-site and one day in class sessions), flexibility is permitted to accommodate the ISPP intern’s schedule, if needed. In general, part-time scheduling may be arranged as long as:
- Intern, Internship Director, site contact, and HNFE faculty advisor (for those who have not completed PhD) approve the proposed schedule of completion; schedule should be documented in the ISPP Timeline Agreement (see appendix B).
- Site availability exists
- Intern dedicates at least two days per week to supervised practice rotations while completing community or management rotations and three days per week during Clinical/Medical Nutrition Therapy rotations
- Intern concurrently attends class sessions corresponding to the respective supervised practice component or has attended the class meetings within the previous six months.

Eligibility Requirements
1. PhD from HNFE (or plan to complete). Fulfills one of the following options:
   a. Documented earned PhD from HNFE or
   b. PhD student in HNFE within one year of expected degree completion. Qualifying exam and preliminary exam successfully completed prior to start of internship.*
2. Completed required coursework. Options include:
   a. Verification Statement or Intent to Complete form from an accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) indicating that all DPD requirements will have been met before the start of the ISPP. Cumulative GPA of 3.0/4.0 in all DPD coursework or
   b. Documentation of Completed Coursework form (see Appendix A)
3. Fulfilled the Recency of Education policy requirements
4. Obtained paid or unpaid work experience in a food and/or nutrition practice setting (a minimum of 500 hours is expected).

*If PhD has not been awarded, written documentation from graduate faculty advisor is required supporting the application and confirming that the preliminary exam and research proposal are completed or scheduled to occur prior to the start of the program. Completion of the PhD must occur within one year of beginning the internship program. ISPP interns must fulfill all HNFE graduate program requirements while enrolled in the PhD program.

Application Process
Interns may begin the program in January or August. Applications for January should be submitted between October 15 and November 15 of the prior year and applications for August should be submitted between March 15 and April 15 of the current year. Applications received after the due date may be considered if an open position exists, however the program start date may be modified according to available practice settings. While not required, applicants are encouraged to communicate their interest with the director as soon as interest in the program is determined. Establishing a meeting with the director will allow the applicant to discuss potential scheduling options for completing the program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISPP Start Date</th>
<th>Submit Application</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Late August</td>
<td>March 15 – April 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early January</td>
<td>September 15 - October 15</td>
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Virginia Tech’s ISPP does not take part in the Dietetic Internship Centralized Application System (DICAS) or computerized match process. To apply, the following items should be submitted to the Internship Director via email:
- Items 1-4 are to be submitted as one document in pdf form. Reference letters (Item 5) should be emailed directly to the program director by the individual writing the reference according to the application due date. The application fee of $50 can be paid at the link provided to applicants on the program website.

1. Letter of application (1,000 words or less) addressing:
   a) Reason for pursuing RDN credential
   b) Experiences that have helped prepare you for your career as a registered dietitian nutritionist
   c) Short- and long-term goals
   d) Strengths and weaknesses
   e) Other information you would like the selection committee to know

2. Transcript(s) - unofficial transcript(s) displaying DPD and PhD coursework if PhD has not been completed, OR official final transcript(s) displaying DPD coursework and PhD if PhD is completed

3. DPD Verification Statement or Intent to Complete from any ACEND accredited program or Documentation of Completed Coursework form (Appendix A).

4. Resume or Curriculum Vitae which includes specific activities completed as well as total hours dedicated to each work or volunteer experience

5. Letters from three professional references addressing application of knowledge, oral and written communication skills, and interpersonal skills (adaptability, initiative, responsibility and organizational skills). Submit one academic reference, one work supervisor, and a third letter from a reference of the applicant’s choice. If the PhD is incomplete, one letter must be from the graduate faculty advisor and must confirm that the preliminary exam and research proposal are completed or scheduled to occur prior to the start of the program.

Intern Selection Process
Virginia Tech is approved by ACEND to enroll two ISPP interns. The ISPP selection committee will consist of the program director, the Northern Virginia site director, the graduate program director (or other graduate program faculty member in cases where a conflict of interest exists), and one current internship program preceptor who has served on the intern selection committee within the past 3 years. Criteria considered for selection include academic performance, experience, references, and fit with program design. Applicants will be notified of the selection decision within 4 weeks of application deadline.
ISPP Timeline Agreement
Upon accepting a position in the program, the ISPP intern will schedule a meeting with the program director, NOVA site director (if applicable), and his/her graduate faculty advisor (if applicable) to complete the ISPP Timeline Agreement (Appendix B). The purpose of this meeting and agreement is to communicate and clarify the timeline for PhD completion, rotation timing and requirements, and overall program expectations. Any individualized needs impacting the scheduling will be discussed at this time. If, at any time during the program, significant alterations in the ISPP Timeline Agreement are required, the program director should be contacted immediately (i.e. within one week of known alteration). For those interns who are completing their PhD concurrently with the ISPP, it is the responsibility of the intern to secure documentation from the graduate faculty advisor that the PhD is expected to be completed within one year of beginning the ISPP. In cases where the PhD is not completed with a year, the ISPP may be deferred until the PhD is earned. Interns are expected to complete all ISPP requirements within two years.

Cost
The ISPP Program Fee is $10,000. Half of the fee ($5,000) is due before the program start date ($500 of which will be paid within 1 month of acceptance) and the remainder ($5000) is due upon documented completion of half of the required practice hours/required competencies. Other expenses and total cost of attendance can be found in the Virginia Tech Internship in Nutrition and Dietetics Policy and Procedures. Interns who have not yet completed their PhD are responsible for associated tuition and fees (http://www.bursar.vt.edu/tuition/). Fulfilling responsibilities of an assistantship while completing a PhD and beginning the ISPP would be extremely difficult. If an intern and faculty member wish to consider this, it should be discussed at the ISPP Timeline Agreement meeting.

Intern Status within the University and Resources Provided by Program
The ISPP is a non-credit program. Once ISPP interns are no longer enrolled VT students for the purpose of completing the PhD, they will not be eligible for resources that are supported by student activity fees. The ISPP interns will be given a unique classification in the university system that allows access to the library and course management system.

Tracking Supervised Practice Hours
ISPP interns are responsible for documenting supervised practice hours worked and classes attended on the overview schedule provided. Preceptors will sign the document at the end of each month confirming supervised practice hours and the director will confirm attendance at classes on the program checklist.

Issuance of Verification Statement
A verification statement will be issued when all internship requirements and the PhD are complete.

APPROVED: (This policy will be reviewed as needed; minimum review every three years.)

Director, VT Internship Program in Nutrition and Dietetics 08/29/2019

Department Head, HNFE 9/19/19

Reviewed and approved by the Dietetics Committee on: June 4, 2019

Reviewed and approved by the HNFE Faculty: August 29, 2019

Next review scheduled: June 4, 2022
APPENDIX A: Documentation of Completed Coursework

Instructions: Required HNFE courses are listed in column A. An unofficial transcript and a syllabus documenting equivalent course content must be provided for review and listed in column C. Prerequisites may be required for courses on this list.

Medical nutrition therapy coursework must have been completed within 5 years of program start date. All other courses must be completed within 10 years of program start date. There is no required recency of education for prerequisites.

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<tr>
<th>A. Required Coursework or Content</th>
<th>B. Course, School, and Term completed</th>
<th>C. Documentation (syllabus and unofficial transcript)</th>
<th>D. Director Approval As part of application review</th>
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<td>Nutrition Across the Lifespan (HNFE 2014 or equivalent content with 3 credits or more)</td>
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<td>Food Science Lab course (HNFE 3024 Science of Food Preparation Lab or equivalent content of 2 credits or more)</td>
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<td>Management of Food and Nutrition Services (HNFE 3114 Foodservice and Meal Management or equivalent content -3 credits or more)</td>
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<td>Nutrient Metabolism (HNFE 4025 Metabolic Nutrition and HNFE 4026 Metabolic Nutrition - 6 credits or more)</td>
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<td>Medical Nutrition Therapy (HNFE 4125/5125 Medical Nutrition Therapy I and HNFE 4126/5126 Medical Nutrition Therapy II (6 credits or more within 5 years)</td>
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<td>Community Nutrition (HNFE 4624 Community Nutrition -3 credits or more)</td>
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<td>Health Counseling, Nutrition Counseling, or nutrition education course (HNFE 3224, HNFE 4644, HNFE 4645) – 3 credits</td>
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APPENDIX B: ISPP Timeline Agreement

Instructions:
After acceptance, the ISPP Intern and Internship Director will schedule a preliminary meeting to create a proposed plan for completion of all supervised practice hours and class attendance. Any credit issued for previous competencies gained will be considered at that time. A calendar will then be created and imbedded in the space below demonstrating a proposed timeline. The Faculty Advisor, the Internship Director and the Intern will meet, if needed, to discuss the proposed plan. Upon approval by each, this document will be signed with a copy provided to each signer. The schedule is subject to change based on availability of practice sites and will be communicated to each signer.

Calendar imbedded here

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<tr>
<th>Intern</th>
<th>Internship Director</th>
<th>NOVA Site Director (if completing any portion in Northern Virginia)</th>
<th>Faculty Advisor</th>
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