

DIDACTIC PROGRAM IN DIETETICS (DPD) & INTERNSHIP PROGRAM IN NUTRITION AND DIETETICS (IP)
Department of Human Nutrition, Foods and Exercise
VIRGINIA TECH

Policy #1: Dietetics Programs Committee Purpose, Composition and Responsibilities

Background, Mission, and Accreditation Status

Preparation for a career as a Registered Dietitian/Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RD/RDN) has a long history at Virginia Tech: programs have been in place for over 60 years as part of previous departments and colleges. Programs have evolved through the various numbering system (Plans I – V), the Coordinated Program in Dietetics (1975-1990), and in 1991, the undergraduate dietetics program became a “Didactic Program in Dietetics” (DPD). The Approved Professional Practice Program (AP4) was initiated in 1990 and evolved in 1996 to the Dietetic Internship (DI) Program. The Northern Virginia Dietetic Internship site began during the 1996-97 academic year after approval was received from the accrediting body. The DI name was changed in the 2013-2014 academic year to the Internship Program in Nutrition and Dietetics (IP) based on new accreditation terminology. In 2013, an Individualized Supervised Practice Pathway (ISPP) as an extension of the IP was approved for up to two students with PhD degrees who have already earned DPD Verification Statements from an accredited program. In summary, there are currently two (2) independently accredited programs in HNFE; the DPD and IP. See Appendix A for Dietetics program timeline.

The current dietetics accrediting agency is the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND). All Dietetics programs throughout the above listed evolution have followed guidelines for approval/accreditation based on the standards in place from the appropriate accrediting agency.

In accordance with ACEND standards, the DPD is housed in a college (College of Agriculture and Life Sciences-CALS) and is accredited in good standing by a U.S. regional institutional accrediting body for higher education (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges-SACSCOC). The IP is also established in an ACEND approved sponsoring organization. Both programs are integrated within the administrative structure of the HNFE department and CALS. Each ACEND accredited program is required to have a designated director who meets the ACEND director role requirements. An individual may only serve as a director of one ACEND accredited program within a department. Each program director reports directly to the HNFE Department Head. Director job descriptions are established as required by ACEND and are approved by the HNFE Department Head.

Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) Overview

The mission of the DPD at Virginia Tech is to *successfully prepare graduates for entry into a dietetic internship, graduate study, and employment through academic training in a research-based, interdisciplinary environment of human nutrition, foods, exercise science, and extension*. The DPD is based in the Department of Human Nutrition, Foods and Exercise (HNFE) within the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALs). The undergraduate Dietetics option is the DPD program. Students who complete the Dietetics option earn a Bachelor of Science degree in HNFE and a ACEND DPD Verification Statement. Alternate paths to earning a DPD Verification Statement are available in the department as described in Policy #3; *ACEND Verification Statement Qualification & Issuance Procedure for Graduate Students and HNFE Alumni*. In addition to the core curriculum required of all undergraduate students at Virginia Tech, students take courses to meet the DPD requirements in various departments including; Agriculture and Applied Economics; Biochemistry; Biology;

Chemistry; Communications; Food Science and Technology; Management; Psychology; and Statistics. See Appendix A for detailed historical DPD timeline.

Internship Program (IP) Overview

The mission of the IP at Virginia Tech is to prepare *confident, competent entry-level dietitians who can balance evidence-based practice with client-centered care*. The IP is a 10-month certificate program based in HNFE with financial management located in Continuing and Professional Education. The program provides required supervised practice hours so, upon successful completion, graduates are eligible to take the registration exam for dietitians. Two program sites exist: Blacksburg, VA and Northern Virginia (NOVA), with each serving approximately 8 interns/year. A site director leads the NOVA site, with the IP Director overseeing both.

Between 150-200 preceptors from 60-80 sites affiliate with the program annually. Throughout the program, interns complete supervised practice in clinical, community, and food service management settings. The program emphasis is Leadership and Professional Development. A two-week intern-designed elective is also featured. See Appendix A for detailed historical timeline.

Purpose of the Dietetics Committee

The purpose of the Dietetics Committee is to continually and systematically assess, plan, implement, and evaluate the DPD and IP following the established standards of education for each program. Committee responsibilities include: policy development, review, and implementation; continuous quality improvement efforts including review of program and learning outcomes; review of accreditation standards and contribution to accreditation status efforts including reporting; curriculum review and development; program communication and reporting to internal and external stakeholders; and establishment of processes and standards related to student and intern eligibility requirements, advising and evaluation.

Composition of the Dietetics Committee

The DPD and IP directors are members and annually alternate chairing the committee. All RD/RDNs who are full-time teaching, research, and/or extension faculty in the HNFE Department will serve on the Dietetics Committee. The Northern Virginia Internship Program Site Director and Graduate Program Coordinator will also serve on this committee. The diverse backgrounds of faculty committee members provide contributions necessary to address the broad perspective of the dietetics profession.

At the discretion of the Department Head and/or committee chair, additional members of the Dietetics Committee may be needed to provide unrepresented perspectives and/or content area expertise to meet the goals and purpose of the committee. These members may include full-time, tenure-track teaching, research, and/or extension faculty who are not RD/RDNs but who have major teaching assignments for the DPD, full- and/or part-time instructional faculty with the RD/RDN credential, RD/RDNs from other academic or administrative departments or units at Virginia Tech, and RD/RDN preceptors from the community. Ad hoc members, affiliated or not with Virginia Tech and/or with or without RD/RDN status, may serve on the Dietetics Committee to provide additional resources when determined necessary by the Department Head and/or committee members.

Responsibilities of the Dietetics Committee Members

Committee members are expected to attend all meetings fully prepared to contribute to, and vote on, all agenda items. Preparation may require review of resources provided by the chair, including but not limited to: dietetics standards of education; program outcomes data; curriculum information; policy and process requirements; instructional issues; and prior learning assessments.

Procedure of the Dietetics Committee

The Dietetics Committee will meet quarterly during the academic year. Additional correspondence may take place via email, including electronic voting, between meetings. Additional or special meetings will be called as necessary. HNFE standard committee operating procedures will be followed by this committee including establishment of a quorum, voting (i.e. 2/3 committee membership for a majority), and use of parliamentary procedure. Agenda items may be introduced by any members of the committee. Agendas and minutes of all meetings are published to HNFE internal site. The committee will follow the HNFE departmental chain of command and HNFE appropriate process for all work.

This policy will be reviewed as needed; minimum review every three years.

APPROVED:

_____ Director, Didactic Program in Dietetics	_____ Date
_____ Director, Internship Program in Nutrition and Dietetics	_____ Date
_____ Department Head, HNFE	_____ Date

Reviewed and approved by the Dietetics Committee:

Vote; unanimously approved by Dietetics Committee at meeting on January 20, 2016

Reviewed and approved by the HNFE Faculty:

Vote; approved by HNFE Faculty at meeting on February 26, 2016

Next Review scheduled:

January 2019

History of the Policy:

Original version signed by DPD Director Dr. Sharon M. Nickols-Richardson on April 1, 2004; HNFE Faculty Endorsement per Faculty Minutes on April 2, 2004; Department Head Dr. Michael Houston on April 21, 2004

Reviewed and approved by the Dietetics Committee on March 2, 2006

Reviewed and approved by the Dietetics Committee on December 2007

Reviewed and approved by Dietetics Committee on August 19, 2015

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Appendix A: Historical Timeline of Dietetics Programs

Department Timeline:

- 1958 School of Home Economics founded at VT
- 1960 Foods and Nutrition Department (within the School of Home Economics) formed
- 1964 Foods and Nutrition changed to Human Nutrition and Foods
- 1982 College of Home Economics renamed College of Human Resources
- 1994 Human Nutrition, Foods and Exercise (HNFE) formed
- 1996 College of Education merges with College of Human Resources to form College of Human Resources and Education
- 2002 HNFE moves to College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

DPD Timeline:

- 1976 Coordinated Undergraduate Program in Dietetics approved
- 1991 Undergraduate program becomes DPD
- 1996 DPD receives “Approval” status for a 10-year period from The American Dietetic Association, Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education (CADE) (the governing body for approval/accreditation of DPDs).
- 2008 DPD officially “Accredited” for a 10-year period by CADE
- 2013 CADE accepts 5-year Program Assessment Report for the DPD at Virginia Tech and grants continued approval status for the DPD at the baccalaureate level.

IP Timeline:

- 1990 Approved Professional Practice Program (AP4) initiated
- 1994 AP4 transitioned into the Dietetic Internship (DI) Program and DI received developmental accreditation status
- 1996 Northern Virginia DI Program founded
- 2003 DI receives “Approval” status for a 10-year period from The American Dietetic Association, Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education (CADE) (the governing body for approval/accreditation of DIs).
- 2008 DI officially “Accredited” for a 10-year period by CADE
- 2011 Leadership and Professional Development Program Emphasis Developed
- 2013 DI name changed to Internship Program in Nutrition and Dietetics (IP)
- 2013 CADE accepts the 5-year Program Assessment Report for the IP at Virginia Tech and grants continued approval status for the IP.
- 2013 Individualized Supervised Practice Program (ISPP) approved by CADE
- 2015 First ISPP graduate