

# ANNUAL ASSESSMENT REPORT DIDACTIC PROGRAM IN DIETETICS (DPD)

Academic Year: 2020 - 2021

## AN OVERVIEW

**Mission Statement:** The mission of the DPD Program at Utah State University is to graduate students with a Bachelor of Science degree (or Verification Statement) who are prepared to perform effectively in a Dietetic Internship or ISPP and to ultimately pass the national registration examination for dietitians and become registered dietitian nutritionists (RDNs). Our mission is also in alignment with the [mission statement of the Nutrition, Dietetics, and Food Sciences Department](#) at USU.

**Program Description:** The Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD Program) at Utah State University is designed to foster the development of our students' knowledge, skills, and abilities in a variety of settings. We continue to produce graduates who are well-prepared for meaningful internship experiences and successful careers in the field of nutrition and dietetics and who (collectively) meet the goals and standards outlined in this report. USU faculty maintain knowledge of current dietetics practice by staying involved in their areas of expertise via professional membership in state and national organizations, continuing education, and participation in dietetics education networking groups.

### Program Enrollment:

	Spring 2018 *	Fall 2018 **	Spring 2019 *	Fall 2019 **	Spring 2020 *	Fall 2020 **	Spring 2021 *
Dietetics (CPD Program)	34	24	36	24	34	24	24
Dietetics (DPD Program)	51	34	47	32	41	21	31
General Dietetics ***	70	104	80	91	70	83	XX
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>XX</b>

\* Spring Semester numbers include Senior and Junior students enrolled in Dietetics + Newly Admitted Sophomores

\*\* Fall Semester numbers include Senior and Junior students enrolled in Dietetics

\*\*\* General Dietetics numbers represent Sophomore and Freshmen students who have not yet formerly applied to a Dietetics Program

### DPD Program Highlights and Statistics:

- 100% of our students complete the DPD Program within 3 years (nearly all complete within 2 years)
- > 90% apply for a dietetic internship within 2 years of completing our DPD Program (most apply within 1 year)
- > 90% enroll in a dietetic internship within 2 years of completing our DPD Program (most enroll within 1 year)
- > 85% of our annual graduate survey responders report they are successfully employed in the field of dietetics or nutrition within 1 year of completing their dietetic internship (after graduation)

**Accreditation:** The Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD Program) at Utah State University Dietetic is accredited by the [Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics](#) (ACEND®). ACEND is the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' accrediting agency for education programs preparing students for careers as registered dietitian nutritionists (RDN) or nutrition and dietetic technicians, registered (NDTR). ACEND serves and protects students and the public by assuring the quality and continued improvement of nutrition and dietetics education programs.

ACEND Accreditation Standards serve as the basis for each education program's evaluation. The 2017 ACEND Standards for DPD Programs can be accessed [HERE](#). The 2022 ACEND Standards will go into effect in June 2022 and can be accessed [HERE](#). A program undergoing accreditation assesses its strengths and challenges based on ACEND's standards and describes its plans for improvement in a Self-Study Report. The report is reviewed by a team of peer reviewers that includes an educator and a practitioner. An ACEND Board member and a staff member assist the team in its review. The

team also visits the program to participate in a series of focused interviews, meetings, observations, and tours. These activities provide information to validate the content of the Self-Study Report and further evaluate the program. The team writes its own report to document its findings and to objectively address key areas of ACEND's standards based on evidence provided by the program and gathered by the team. The ACEND Board of Directors reviews the team's and uses it to arrive at a final accreditation decision.

The DPD Program at USU was initially accredited 22 years ago (April 1999) and has remained in good standing ever since. Accreditation site visits occur every 7 years. The last accreditation cycles for the Coordinated (CPD) and Didactic (DPD) Dietetics Programs at Utah State were completed in [January 2016](#). Both programs were approved and are listed in ACEND's [Accredited Programs Directory](#) online. The full accreditation report and additional program outcome data may be obtained by contacting a Program Director ([rebecca.charlton@usu.edu](mailto:rebecca.charlton@usu.edu) or [marlene.graf@usu.edu](mailto:marlene.graf@usu.edu)). Relevant sections are summarized in this report. The next accreditation site visit is scheduled for 2023.

## OUTCOMES & RESULTS

### Program Goals & Objectives:

<p><b>Program Goal #1:</b> Prepare DPD graduates for completion of a dietetic internship or ISPP through provision of current knowledge and skill development.</p>	<p><b>Program Goal #2:</b> Prepare graduates for entry-level employment in dietetics or a related field as a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Objective 1.1:</b> 100% of students admitted to the DPD Program will complete it <math>\leq</math> 3 years (150% of program length)</li> <li>• <b>Objective 1.2:</b> 90% of DPD graduates will apply to internship <math>\leq</math> 12 months post-graduation</li> <li>• <b>Objective 1.3:</b> 75% of DPD graduates will enroll in internship <math>\leq</math> 3 years post-graduation</li> <li>• <b>Objective 1.4:</b> 90% of DPD graduates will pass RD Registration Exam <math>\leq</math> 1 year of first attempt</li> <li>• <b>Objective 1.5:</b> 75% of DPD graduates will be ranked by Distance Internship (DI) Directors as "average" or better</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Objective 2.1:</b> 50% of our DPD graduates will obtain employment in dietetics or a related field <math>\leq</math> 1 year of completing a dietetic internship.</li> </ul>

### Actual Measureable Outcomes

Academic Year	GOAL #1: Prepare graduates for completion of a dietetic internship or ISPP through provision of current knowledge and skill development.					GOAL #2: Prepare graduates for entry-level employment in dietetics or a related field as a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN).
	Objective 1.1 100% will complete $\leq$ 3 years (150% of program length)	Objective 1.2 90% will apply to internship $\leq$ 12 mo post-graduation	Objective 1.3 75% will enroll in internship $\leq$ 3 years post-graduation	Objective 1.4 90% will pass RD Registration Exam $\leq$ 1 yr of first attempt	Objective 1.5 75% will be ranked by DI Directors as "average" or better	Objective 2.1 50% will obtain employment in dietetics or a related field $\leq$ 1 year of completing dietetic internship.
2016	Met (100%)	Not Met (88%)	Met (88%)	Met (100%)	Met (81%)	Met (86%)
2017	Met (100%)	Met (93%)	Met (93%)	Not Met (82%)	Met (80%)	Met (88%)
2018	Met (100%)	Met (93%)	Met (93%)	Not Met (87%)	Met (83%)	Met (88%)
2019 *	Met (100%)	Met (94%)	Met (94%)	Met (100%)	**	***
2020 *	Met (100%)	Met (91%)	Met (91%)	Not Met (60%)	***	***

FYI: The Pass rate for Objective 1.4 is specific to those in the cohort who have taken the exam as of report date.

\* This cohort has not been graduated for 3 years. Missing data will be available later.

\*\*\* This cohort has not been out of internship for a year. This data will be available later.

**Pass Rates for DPD Graduates on RD Registration Examination:**

Year (In Sequence from Least Recent to Most Recent)	(A) # of Students Taking RD Exam for the First Time	Students Passing the CDR Exam		Pass Rate Percentages	
		(B) # of Students Passing on First Attempt	(C) # Passing within 1 Year of First Attempt (if available)	(B/A) First Time Pass Rate	(C/A) One-Year Pass Rate (if available)
2010	12	12	12	100%	100%
2011	08	06	08	75%	75%
2012	07	06	06	86%	86%
2013	10	10	10	100%	100%
2014	16	14	14	88%	88%
2015	11	10	10	91%	91%
2016	09	09	09	100%	100%
2017	11	07	09	64%	82%
2018	15	12	13	80%	87%
2019	11	11	11	100%	100%
2020	05	03	03	60%	60%
2021	08	05	05	63%	63%

\* Pass rate is specific to those in the cohort who have taken the exam as of report date

**RD Registration Exam Statistics (5-Year Average = 2016 - 2020):**

- Pass Rate for 2021 Examinees (First or Second Attempt) = 63%
- 5-Year Average Pass Rate on the RD Registration Exam (First Attempt) = 80.7%
- 5-Year Percentile Rank (based on First Attempt Pass Rate) = 79<sup>th</sup> Percentile
- 5-Year Percentile Rank (based on First Attempt Mean Score) = 63<sup>rd</sup> Percentile
- Institution Total Score is Above National Score (by Year): 2016, 2018, 2019, 2020

**Data Regarding Previous Graduates (2019 Academic Year) as reported in the 2021 ACEND Annual Report:**

- Graduates who applied for admission to a supervised practice program (dietetic internship) within 12 months of program completion = 94%
- Graduates who were admitted to a supervised practice program (dietetic internship) within 12 months of program completion = 94%
- Graduates not in supervised practice/further education who found a job in dietetics within 12 months of program completion = 0%
- Graduates not in supervised practice/further education who found a job outside dietetics within 12 months of program completion = 0%
- Graduates pursuing further education (not in supervised practice nor employed) = 6%
- Graduates who both found a job within 12 months of program completion and are also pursuing further education = 0%
- Graduates who completed program within 150% of program length (3 years) = 100%

## PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

### Program Changes Based on Assessment Data

- Master's Degree Requirement for Future RDNs. Effective January 1, 2024, the minimum degree requirement for eligibility to take the registration examination for dietitians will change from a bachelor's degree to a graduate degree. All other didactic and supervised practice eligibility requirements will remain the same. The CPD and DPD Programs are in the process of transitioning in an effort to accommodate this change and also implement the 2022 ACEND standards. The CPD Program will transition to a masters-level program and the DPD Program will include at least one or more pathways to a dietetic internship and master's degree. It is anticipated that we will admit our first masters-level cohort in AY 2022.
- Decline in RD Exam Pass Rates. A change in the RD exam format (in 2017) resulted in declining rates for many programs, including USU. Last year (2019), USU invested in two computer programs to help students prepare for the RD exam during the summer after graduation. Professors also reviewed the new exam content to make certain courses reflect current concepts used on the exam.
- Job Preparedness. Recent employer surveys have shown a downward trend for student preparedness for their first job. The stakeholder's survey revealed this was largely in areas of "soft skills" including negotiation and communication. As the CPD and DPD Programs adjust their curriculum, attention is being given on how to better recruit, train, and prepare students for the modern workforce.

## FEEDBACK

### Academic

Our Program is reviewed annually (May - August) and is accredited by ACEND (Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics). ACEND is the accrediting agency for all dietetics programs preparing students to begin careers as RDNs (Registered Dietitian Nutritionists) or DTRs (Dietitian Technicians Registered). As a program, we continue to meet required ACEND accreditation guidelines.

Annual evaluation and adjustment of curriculum ensures regular inclusion of innovative teaching methods, materials, and delivery.

### Program Assessment Plan:

The assessment plan involves the following steps:

1. April: Current student focus groups allow for unstructured student feedback
2. May: Competency outcomes assessed and table updated
3. May: Curriculum meeting with dietetics faculty for course adjustments
4. June: Graduate outcomes reviewed (graduation statistics, job attainment, graduate school admissions)
5. October: Alumni and current student Qualtrics surveys reviewed and emailed to respondents
6. October: RDN exam pass rates reports received from Commission on Dietetics Registration
7. November: Alumni and current student surveys compiled for data analysis
8. December: Results presented to dietetics faculty for response and program planning
9. December: Assessment report prepared for NDFS