

# Master of Dietetics Administration (MDA) Assessment Report 2023

## Pre-RD MDA

### Program Overview

The Pre-RD MDA received Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) accreditation as a Future Education Graduate program on August 12, 2022. The program is a 1-year program that includes 37 graduate credits and integrates 1000 hours of supervised experiential learning, leading to a Master of Dietetics Administration degree. Students in the Pre-RD MDA program are working towards eligibility to take and pass the RD Exam and to become Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDN).

*Program Mission Statement:* The mission of the Utah State University Master of Dietetics Administration is to prepare entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists in a distance format to empower them to be future leaders through learning, critical thinking, discovery, and engagement who utilize their experience and individual perspectives to improve the health and well-being of the communities they serve.

### Program Numbers

The new program was developed, and the first cohort started in August 2023. The program was able to fill as planned in the 2023-2024 year with 35 students. A total of 54 applications were received. There has been a reduction in the number of students applying to dietetics programs nationwide. Students are being recruited nationwide and are training in 16 different states for the 2023-2024 cohort.

MDA Cohort	No. of students	Completion time 1 year	Completion time > 1 year	Percent of students graduating at 1 year	Total students graduating
2023-2024	35	NA	NA	NA	**/35

### Outcome Standards

As part of ACEND Accreditation, students must meet 39 competencies and over 200 performance indicators. Details of these requirements can be seen in the [ACEND Standards for FEM](#). We are committed to excellence in providing curriculum development to meet or exceed all required standards. The assessment of these competencies and performance indicators comes from program faculty in conjunction with industry partners and preceptors who provide the learning experiences for the supervised experiential learning portion of the program. Preceptors complete and submit student evaluations for the competencies in which they observe. Students must meet expectations and show competence in 100% of the requirements to meet program completion requirements.

In addition to data collection for the University, the program completes an annual program report for ACEND.

### Program Outcomes:

- Program Goal #1: USU MDA graduates will demonstrate competence in the knowledge and skills required of entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists.
  - Objective 1.1: At least 80% of program students complete program requirements within 1.5 years (150% of the planned program length).
  - Objective 1.2: At least 80% of program graduates take the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists within 12 months of program completion.
  - Objective 1.3: 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%.
  - Objective 1.4: Of graduates who seek employment, at least 80% are employed in nutrition and dietetics or related fields within 12 months of graduation.
  - Objective 1.5: At least 80% of the employers who respond to the employer survey will indicate they are satisfied with their employee's (USU MDA graduate's) preparation for entry-level practice.
  - Objective 1.6: At least 80% of graduates will rate themselves as competent and prepared for entry-level dietetics practice.
- Program Goal #2: USU MDA graduates will participate in nutrition and dietetics-related leadership opportunities within the communities they serve.
  - Objective 2.1: At program completion, 80% of graduates will score higher on the leadership attributes self-assessment compared to the pre-program leadership attributes self-assessment.
  - Objective 2.2: Within one year of graduation, 15% of graduates who respond to the one-year follow-up survey will report serving in a nutrition and dietetics-related leadership position.

### **Post-RD MDA**

#### MDA Program Changes

The MDA has undergone a transition to accommodate changes in dietetics education requirements. Beginning in Fall 2023, the MDA has two tracks, the Pre-RD MDA (described above) and the Post-RD MDA. The Post-RD MDA, which is the historical version of the MDA, continues to be available to past graduates of the USU Dietetic Internship (DI) and other dietitians that are seeking a master's degree with a management and leadership focus.

#### Program Numbers

Demand for the Post-RD MDA continues to be strong. The average cohort size for the last 3 years is 22. This year (2023), the cohort size is slightly lower than average, which is a reflection of fewer students coming from the DI. The DI has had smaller cohorts the last few years and over 90% of students in the Post-RD MDA come from the USU DI. See the spreadsheet below for yearly numbers, total students and graduates since 2012. Completion rates and time frame continue to be very good. For cohorts that began in 2012 through 2022, there is a total of 238 graduates. Approximately half of students graduate

within one year and % graduating within 2 years is typically around 80%. For most continuing students, graduation is anticipated under or around the 2-year mark. There is a trend for the average time to completion to be longer than several years ago. This is likely a reflection of the greater percentage of students are coming directly from the USU dietetic internship. These students often need an extra semester or two to complete coursework or the MDA project since they are beginning jobs as dietitians at the same time they are starting the MDA. Further the Covid-19 pandemic likely resulted in longer graduation timeframes for the Fall 2020 cohort.

MDA Cohort start	# students	Years to Completion								Continuing	% graduating at 1 year	% graduating within 2 years
		1	1.33	1.67	2	2.33	2.67	3+				
Fall 2012	9	6	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	67%	89%
Fall 2013	12	8	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	67%	92%
Fal 2014	11	5	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	45%	100%
Fall 2015	31	17	7	4	1	1	1	0	0	0	55%	94%
Fall 2016	25	13	5	6	0	0	0	1	0	0	52%	96%
Fall 2017	19	6	3	3	4	1	1	1	0	0	32%	84%
Fall 2018	33	18	4	2	3	1	1	2	2	2	55%	82%
Fall 2019	36	16	9	1	4	1	2	2	1	1	44%	83%
Fall 2020	26	6	3	5	0	4	1	3	4	4	23%	54%
Fall 2021	29	13	7	3	3	3	0	0	0	0	45%	
Fall 2022	19	8	6							5		
<b>Total (2012-2022)</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12</b>		<b>46%</b>	
Fall 2023	18											
		<b>268 Total # students including current cohort</b>										
		<b>238 Total # grads (2012 cohort thru 2022 cohort graduates)</b>										
		<b>22.00 Average cohort size for past 3 years</b>										