Western Carolina University Nutrition and Dietetics Program
Technical Standards for Admission

The technical standards set forth by the Nutrition and Dietetics Program identify the attributes needed to establish the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to meet the standards of the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) in order to achieve the Core Knowledge for the Registered Dietitian (KRD) and fulfill the WCU ND Program mission.

The mission of the ND Program at Western Carolina University is to:

*Provide a sound academic foundation that facilitates the development of effective, engaged dietetic professionals who will integrate their knowledge, skills and values in application of current evidence in food and nutrition science to improve the health of individuals and diverse communities.*

The purpose of this document is to delineate the technical psychomotor, and cognitive skills essential to complete this program and perform as a competent dietetics practitioner. Compliance with the ND Program’s technical standards does not guarantee a student’s eligibility for a Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) verification statement or acceptance into a Dietetic Internship Program (DI).

Students applying to the WCU Nutrition and Dietetics program must be able to demonstrate the following skills and abilities:

**Psychomotor Skills**

1. Understand, read, speak and write the English language at a college-level consistent with competent professional practice.
2. Communicate effectively and sensitively with peers, faculty, staff, community partners, clients and patients including individuals of different ages and from different cultural and social backgrounds.
3. Demonstrate normal or corrected hearing including the ability to hear electronic alarms and timers.
4. Demonstrate normal or corrected vision including the ability to correctly distinguish color.
5. Participate in sensory evaluation of the taste, texture and aroma of various food and beverage products. (Exceptions can be made for students with documented food allergies or religious practices, however, exceptions will not be made for personal taste preferences or eating patterns.)
6. Capability to physically maneuver in required settings, stand for at least 4 hours, walk, squat, crawl, bend/stoop, climb stairs, reach above shoulder level, lift up to 40 pounds, use standing balance, use both hands repetitively, grasp, demonstrate manual dexterity and fine motor manipulation.
7. Function under stress and regulate one’s own reaction including the capacity to maintain composure and continue to function well during periods of high stress by demonstrating appropriate coping mechanisms that allow for adequate emotional and mental stability.
8. Maintain good personal health and hygiene in order not to jeopardize the health and safety of self and individuals with whom one interacts.
9. Represent Western Carolina University in an appropriate manner and appearance when visiting off campus affiliations, class days when presenting or when there are guest speakers presenting, and when attending field observations.
Cognitive/Learning Skills
10. Organize, multi-task and prioritize work under pressure to meet specified deadlines.
11. Demonstrate self-motivation and the ability to work independently
12. Collaborate by coordinating strategies, actions, and responsibilities among people or groups to achieve a goal together.
13. Utilize critical thinking skills to draw accurate conclusions about issues by analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating facts, informed opinions and observations.
14. Apply critical reasoning, problem-solving, and independent decision-making skills.
15. Accept constructive criticism and incorporate suggestions appropriately.

Ethical Behavior

If a student states he/she can meet the technical standards with accommodation, then the University will determine whether it agrees that the student can meet the technical standards with reasonable accommodation; this includes a review of whether the accommodations requested are reasonable, taking into account whether accommodation would jeopardize clinician/patient safety, or the educational process of the student or the institution, including all coursework, clinical experiences and internships deemed essential to graduation.

The Western Carolina University Student Disability Services will evaluate a student who states he/she could meet the program's technical standards with accommodation and confirm that the stated condition qualifies as a disability under applicable laws.

I certify that I have read and understand the technical standards for selection listed above and I believe to the best of my knowledge that I can meet each of these standards with or without accommodation. Should I feel I require accommodation to meet these standards, I will contact the Office of Disability Services at (828) 227-3886 to determine what accommodations may be available. I understand that if I am unable to meet these standards with or without accommodations, I will not be admitted into the program.

Signature of Applicant ________________________________ Date _____________