

What can I do with a degree in...

# NUTRITION & DIETETICS

## What is NUTRITION AND DIETETICS?

Students in WCU's Nutrition and Dietetics program gain an in-depth understanding of anatomy, physiology, metabolism, and nutrition to help people improve their health. WCU's Nutrition and Dietetics program, accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND), focuses on a sound academic nutrition science foundation that facilitates the development of effective, engaged dietetic professionals. Students gain in-depth knowledge in chemical, biological, and social processes while integrating their skills and values with current evidence to improve the health of individuals and diverse communities.

Graduates with a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Nutrition and Dietetics may work in public health nutrition, food service management, education, wellness, or other business and industry positions such as sales, marketing, public relations, or research and development.

Students who wish to become RDNs will need to complete the undergraduate nutrition and dietetics major and then apply to a competitive ACEND accredited supervised practice Dietetic Internship, Coordinated Program, or Individualized Supervised Practice Pathway. Satisfactory completion of 1200 hours of supervised practice in an accredited program meets the requirements for eligibility to take the national exam to become a RDN.

## What are the DEGREE OPTIONS?

**Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Nutrition and Dietetics**

**Master of Health Science (M.H.S.)**



## What is the ADMISSION PROCESS?

Students must complete pre-requisites and formally apply to the program during the Spring semester before admission into the ND major that begins each Fall semester. For more information on pre-requisites and other admission information, please visit the [Nutrition and Dietetics website](#).

## What JOBS ARE AVAILABLE?

With additional studies and credentialing, graduates may pursue a variety of roles including registered dietitian nutritionist, clinical dietitian, community nutritionist, food service director, sports nutritionist, weight

loss specialist, lactation consultant, food technologist, food product developer, or dietetic technician.

## Who employs NUTRITION AND DIETETICS graduates?

Our graduates are prepared to work with a variety of populations from pediatrics to geriatrics in hospitals, clinics, and other healthcare facilities; public health organizations; government and nonprofit agencies; community centers; wellness and fitness centers; nursing homes; school systems; and private practices.

# MAJOR MAP

**How to use this map:** Review the four categories and suggestions of activities and when you should consider engaging in them. Remember, these are just suggestions! There is a fillable space for you to add in any other ideas you have to set yourself up for success in life after college.

## 1st YEAR

## 2nd YEAR

### EXCEL IN ACADEMICS

In addition to general elective courses, many first-year students will focus on required Biology, Chemistry, Health, and Math pre-requisites. Check out the [8-semester plan](#) and make an appointment with your advisor.

Second year courses continue to focus on the science fields such as Biology, Chemistry, and required pre-requisite Nutrition courses. Check out the [8-semester plan](#) and make an appointment with your advisor.

Students should focus on obtaining at least the minimum overall GPA, pre-professional GPA, and satisfactory completion of the pre-requisite courses to be eligible to apply to the program, typically in the Spring of the second year.

### GET HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE

Check out [WCU's DegreePlus program](#) and choose which events in any of the four categories you want to attend.

Get involved with Student Association of Nutrition and Dietetics (SAND), the ND student organization

Start logging your shadowing, volunteer, or experiences in preparation to apply for the undergraduate ND major as well as in preparation to apply for a dietetic internship program in the fourth year. See what on-campus employment opportunities are available by logging in to Job-Cat via your MyWCU.

Engage in paid or unpaid experiences before applying to the undergraduate ND major. Continue to log your experiences in preparation to apply for a dietetic internship program in the fourth year.

Connect with the [Center for Career and Professional Development](#) for resume and personal statement reviews before applying to the ND major.

### BE PART OF THE COMMUNITY

Connect with the [Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning](#) and ask about the [Spark Award](#), a program aimed to encourage and recognize students who are connected with their community.

Develop deeper relationships with the organizations for which you volunteer. Ask for special projects or responsibilities that you can highlight on a resume.

If you want to [study abroad](#), this is a good year to have that experience. You might also consider global internship opportunities related to your field like [GoAbroad](#) or [World Endeavors](#).

### PREPARE FOR LIFE AFTER COLLEGE

Further explore your career options or career interests using the [Center for Career and Professional Development's](#) online resources, [Focus 2](#), and [Onet Online](#).

Check out [CCPD's list of career-building activities](#) and participate in an activity this year, such as attending Career Fair Plus.

Connect with a career counselor early on to explore opportunities and experiences you can do while in college to further develop your professional resume.

Start a spreadsheet of professional schools or [accredited dietetic internship programs](#) you wish to apply to in a few years; label your spreadsheet with each school's admission requirements and required application materials so that you are aware of the expectations.

## Looking for a minor? Consider these options:

Biology  
Chemistry  
Communication

Environmental Health  
Hospitality& Tourism Manage-  
ment

Psychology  
Sociology  
Spanish

### 3rd YEAR

Third level courses focus heavily on ND courses such as food service management and production, nutrition assessment, nutrient metabolism, nutrition across the lifespan, and nutrition research methodology. Check out the [8-semester plan](#) and make an appointment with your advisor.

Volunteer with relevant area organizations who work with a variety of populations, such as limited resource or homeless, veterans, children, families, etc. Other organizations such as community garden programs, health departments, and senior resource centers are great options as well.

Consider networking with professionals in your field at national or regional venues such as the [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Food and Nutrition Conference and Expo](#), and [NC Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics](#).

Continue to build relationships and volunteer with area organizations in your field.

Connect with alumni in your field through [LinkedIn](#)

Visit the CCPD to hone your professional resume and cover letter. Utilize the [Writing and Learning Commons](#) for MCAT, GRE, and other professional exam preparation sessions, if applying for professional or graduate schools. Take the MCAT, GRE, etc. Use [Big Interview](#) to learn more about professional interviews.

Attend open houses for graduate or [ACEND accredited internship programs](#).

### 4th YEAR

Courses in your final year will focus on topics such as food service management and production, community nutrition, medical nutrition therapy, nutrition counseling and interviewing, and preparation for professional practice.

Students who wish to become a RDN will also apply for an ACEND accredited internship or a master's degree program during their final year. Check out the [8-semester plan](#), make an appointment with your advisor, and [apply for graduation!](#)

Investigate requirements for full-time jobs. Assess what skills or experiences you're lacking and invest time in seeking additional opportunities such as certification programs, classes, or professional development workshops during your last year to fill that gap. Connect with your faculty advisor or career counselor.

Submit research or presentation proposals to national or regional conferences to gain public speaking experiences.

Network with employers and non-profits at the annual Career Fair Plus event, held each October and February.

Apply to graduate schools, if applicable, or to your [dietetic internship sites](#).

Look for and apply for jobs between 4 and 6 months before graduation if you do not plan to do a dietetic internship or graduate/ professional school.

Polish your resume, cover letter, and interview skills by using the [CCPD](#).

Internships are still the number-one educational experience employers look for in a recent college graduate resume. (Chronicle of Higher Education's study on 59,000 employers)

**DID YOU KNOW?**

# MORE INFORMATION

## INTERNSHIP Information

To become a registered dietitian nutritionist, students continue their studies by applying for an ACEND accredited supervised practice dietetic internship program before taking and passing the [RDN credentialing exam](#). Typically, students apply for their dietetic internship (DI) during their fourth year and will complete the DI after the completion of their undergraduate degree. Students will then be eligible to take the Commission on Dietetic Registration's dietetic registration exam following the completion of the 1200-hour accredited internship program.

Students may choose to complete their DI at any accredited institution offering a DI program. Programs can range between 8 and 24 months, and include at least 1200 hours of supervised practice while meeting the ACEND core knowledge and competency requirements. DI graduates are eligible to take the national Registration Examination for Dietitians.

## SKILLS LEARNED in the classroom

The core competencies will center on developing skills, knowledge, and attitudes such as:

- independent thinking
- information handling and organization
- problem solving
- written and oral communication
- professional teamwork
- analytical and synthetic reasoning
- curiosity and creativity
- critical evaluation
- attention to detail
- scientific research skills
- technical skills

## KNOWLEDGE Base

This program will prepare students to:

- speak and write effectively.
- work effectively in groups.
- identify needed actions or presented problems, find and use appropriate information to address the action or problem, identify alternative solutions, and make decisions.
- gain knowledge in supporting areas such as biochemistry, physiology, and genetics
- use knowledge of dietary needs for special clients and how to accommodate them.

## Professional RESOURCES

- Commission on Dietetic Registration: [www.cdrnet.org](http://www.cdrnet.org)
- Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)
- North Carolina Dietetic Association: [www.eatrightnc.org](http://www.eatrightnc.org)
- International Confederation of Dietetic Associations: [www.internationaldietetics.org](http://www.internationaldietetics.org)

## QUESTIONS?

For questions, please visit the School of Health Sciences Student Services Center at [ssc.wcu.edu](http://ssc.wcu.edu) or call the Nutrition and Dietetics program at 828-227-7113 or visit [go.wcu.edu/nd](http://go.wcu.edu/nd)

To schedule an appointment with a career counselor, contact the Center for Career and Professional Development, 828-227-7133 or [careerservices@wcu.edu](mailto:careerservices@wcu.edu).