Master of Health Sciences-
Nutrition Concentration
(MHS-ND)/
Dietetic Internship (DI) Program
Policies and Procedures
Handbook

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WCU MHS-ND/ DI Program Handbook
WCU MHS-ND/Dietetic Internship Program

WCU’s Dietetic Internship Program is included in a 22-month Master of Health Sciences (MHS)-Nutrition (ND) concentration program which begins each Fall semester and is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND). ACEND serves the public by establishing and enforcing eligibility requirements and accreditation standards that ensure the quality and continued improvement of nutrition and dietetics education programs. Programs meeting these standards are accredited by ACEND.

MHS-ND/Dietetic Internship Mission Statement
The mission of the Dietetic Internship Program within the MHS-ND concentration at Western Carolina University is to provide a high-quality supervised practicum that prepares entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists and promotes life-long learning, meaningful engagement, and service to the region.

ACEND Goals and Objectives
The goals and objectives (measurable outcomes as required and approved by ACEND) for the MHS-ND/DI program at Western Carolina University are as follows:

➢ **Goal 1:** Graduates will become entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists practicing in North Carolina and Appalachia.

   o **Objective 1.1:** At least 80% of responding employers of dietetic internship program graduates will indicate satisfaction with graduates’ preparation for entry-level practice.

   o **Objective 1.2:** At least 80% of program graduates complete program/degree requirements within 36 months (150% of the program length).

   o **Objective 1.3:** 80% of program graduates take the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists within 12 months of program completion.

   o **Objective 1.4:** 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%.

   o **Objective 1.5:** Of graduates who seek employment, 75% are employed in nutrition and dietetics or related fields within 12 months of graduation.

➢ **Goal 2:** Graduates will pursue individualized professional development activities and engagement in service.

   o **Objective 2.1:** At least 80% of program graduates will complete a professional development activity within the first year of program...
Objective 2.2: At least 80% of program graduates will pursue service to the profession of dietetics as a preceptor, leader, or through civic engagement within 5 yrs post-graduation.

Admission Requirements

Application to WCU’s MHS-ND program is competitive. Applicants must meet minimum requirements and include a variety of application materials to aid assessment of potential for success in the program.

Prospective students must apply to Western Carolina University’s Graduate School, Master of Health Sciences (MHS) Program, as well as through the Dietetic Internship Centralized Application System (DICAS) for admission. Students matched with an internship through DICAS are not guaranteed acceptance to WCU’s MHS program. For more information on WCU graduate school application and graduate application deadlines, visit https://www.wcu.edu/apply/graduate-school/index.aspx.

Admission requirements for WCU’s MHS Program

- Minimum GPA of 3.0 in all upper-level undergraduate course work
- GRE scores if GPA is less than 3.5
- 3 letters of recommendation from instructors or employers who are able to judge aptitude for graduate study
- A Goal Statement

Application requirements for the Dietetic Internship through DICAS

Please note that DICAS minimum standards exceed WCU MHS standards listed above.

- Dietetic Internship application submission via Dietetic Internship Centralized Application Services (DICAS)
- Official transcript(s) for all schools attended
- Minimum DPD GPA of 3.2
- A resume
- Evidence of volunteer and/or paid experience in nutrition and dietetics
- Declaration of Intent to Complete Degree or DPD Verification Statement
- Participation in National D&D Digital Systems Computer Matching or via pre-select option

Applications are reviewed by a MHS-ND selection committee. Qualified applicants may be invited to an in-person or video interview with a panel of selection committee members to help identify the most highly qualified and prepared applicants for the MHS-ND program.
Verification Statement Requirements
Verification Statement: An original, completed verification form obtained from your DPD director, which states that you have completed all ACEND®-required coursework. This is different from the form you sent in with your DI application packet. We require an original copy. Your original verification statement must be on file prior to beginning the program.

Required Documentation to Participate in Supervised Practice Experiences

Immunization Records
Proof of the following immunization records will be needed by the end of the first Spring semester when students are enrolled in the MHS-ND program

- Proof of TDaP (*tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis which may be as individual immunizations or as the TDap vaccine, does not expire, however tetanus booster is required every 10 years*)
- Proof of Tetanus (TD) booster (*valid for 10 years*)
- Proof of negative TB Skin test (*within the past 6 months*) or negative chest x-ray (*does not expire*)
- Proof of MMR series or titer (*does not expire*)
- Proof of Varicella vaccine or titer (*history of disease is not sufficient, immunity must be verified*)
- Proof of Hepatitis B series or titer (*does not expire*)
- Proof of Influenza Vaccine (*to be administered each Fall*)

The lab tests and immunization records will be shared by the MHS-ND program with supervised practice facility sites that require medical information. This is in accordance with university and most supervised practice site policies. Drug testing is required by most practicum facilities.

Professional Liability Insurance
Each MHS-ND student must carry professional liability insurance once supervised practice (practicum courses) begins in the program. Professional liability insurance provides malpractice coverage for MHS-ND students during the program rotations and didactics trainings. The ND Clinical Education Coordinator submits MHS-ND student information annually for the university’s Student Blanket Professional Liability Policy. The cost of the coverage is the responsibility of the MHS-ND student and is charged through the student’s university account.
Medical Insurance
Although not a requirement of WCU distance students, MHS-ND students are required to carry medical insurance once supervised practice (practicum courses) begins in the program. MHS-ND students may select their insurance plans and coverage, and acquiring and maintaining insurance is the responsibility of the MHS-ND student. The MHS-ND student must submit a copy of medical insurance coverage to the Dietetic Internship Director by the last day of the first Spring semester. Should a MHS-ND student be injured or ill at WCU or at a supervised practice facility rotation, the MHS-ND student’s medical coverage would take effect to cover costs.

Criminal Background Checks
All MHS-ND students who plan to enroll in practicum courses are required to complete criminal background checks. Students who might be affected by this policy should discuss with their DI Director as to whether they should commit time and resources to pursue Dietetic Internship placement. The Dietetic Internship Director will notify interns of criminal background check procedures. The MHS-ND student is responsible for completing required paperwork and the cost of criminal background checks.

The ND Clinical Education Coordinator will submit to a screening company a list of names of MHS-ND students who plan to enroll in practicum courses. An email will be generated from the company to the student to request additional information. Upon completion, students and the College of Health and Human Sciences will receive a copy of the background check. Some supervised practice sites may require students to obtain a clear criminal background check before participating with their agency and may also require additional screening. Red flags on background checks and non-compliance of completing background checks are reviewed under the CHHS background check policy. Criminal background checks are confidential and the information within them will not be shared with any other faculty member or students.

Drug Testing
MHS-ND students who plan to enroll in practicum courses are required to follow the College of Health and Human Sciences Drug and Alcohol Policy (Appendix C.) and pass a 12-panel Urine Drug screen prior to beginning practicum placement. Any positive Urine Drug screens will result in the immediate dismissal of an intern from the program. Students are expected to pay for the Urine Drug Screening. Fees range from $40.00-60.00. Some students may need two urinary drug screens; determination is based on practicum facility requirements of drug screen frequency.

Dietetic Interns as Employees
Site Preceptors are informed that MHS-ND supervised practice students must not be used to replace employees. However, it is expected that students are aware that shadowing or assisting an employee in the context of a learning opportunity during supervised practice experiences is normal and expected.
Paid Compensation
The WCU MHS-ND Program does not provide compensation to students. Compensation from supervised practice facilities may occur in various forms such as complimentary meals or parking. In rare cases, facilities may offer financial compensation. Any form of compensation may vary from year to year and is not guaranteed; facility compensation is at the discretion of the supervised practice agencies and further details are worked out between the facility and the student once underway in practicum sites. As such, facility compensation is independent of the MHS-ND program and it is not considered in site placement decisions. Students are responsible for any taxes due from compensation.

Identification Verification
Our goal is to provide access to diverse, state of the art technological tools to support learning, enhance instruction, and facilitate resource sharing, innovation and communication. All students are expected to respect the rights of others and the integrity of the systems and related physical resources in an ethical manner. WCU students are automatically set up with a unique username for logging into myWCU, campus email, and the learning management system (LMS). Should log in problems occur, please contact the WCU Help Desk at 828-227-7487; ithelp@wcu.edu. Access to the Western Carolina University’s network use is denied without a user ID. User IDs and all files associated with that ID are deleted after each semester. It is the student’s responsibility to back up their files.

All MHS-ND program courses will utilize the university designated LMS, and students may be expected to utilize the LMS to access course announcements & information, submit and complete assessments, and participate in class discussion. The university LMS is also the platform for offering distance instruction in MHS-ND program courses. Distance offered courses may include asynchronous interaction online (e.g. discussion board, blogs, wikis, podcasts, e-portfolios) or synchronous “real time” learning.

The use of proctored exams is determined by the instructor. The course syllabus will indicate if proctored exams are required. Western Carolina University has a Professional Testing Center offering proctored exams for Distance Learners. Western Carolina University’s Testing Center offers professional test proctoring for any distance learning student regardless of the college, university or school you attend and is a member of the UNC Proctoring Network and the National College Testing Association (NCAT). The service is available Monday through Friday during normal business hours between 8am and 5pm by appointment only.

Students will need to schedule their exams as early as possible, but at least two weeks prior to the scheduled testing date(s). They may schedule their proctored exam by telephone 828-227-7397 or by email. Students requiring a change within the 14 days preceding the exam will need to contact Professional Testing for scheduling options. WCU Distance Learning students may also arrange to have their tests or assignments proctored by a qualified individual or organization located in closer proximity to them. For ease in identifying qualified proctors, Western Carolina University participates in
the UNC Online Proctoring Network. This Network has been established to enhance
the academic integrity of online courses by providing students with an easily
accessible pool of qualified proctors located within as well as outside the state of North
Carolina. The UNC Online Proctoring Network includes proctors who do not charge, as
well as proctors who do charge, for their services. Students are personally responsible
for payment of any proctoring fees if they choose to utilize a proctor who charges for
this service. Students are also responsible for any parking fees that may be associated
with their use of a particular proctor.

Privacy of Student Information
MHS-ND (Dietetic Internship) files are kept locked in a file cabinet in the Dietetic
Internship Director’s office and on a secure online drive. All information in the student’s
file is kept private except for examples of student assignments or projects. Preceptors
may refer to a MHS-ND student’s project, as requested. The Dietetic Internship Director,
ND Clinical Education Coordinator, ND Program Director, SHS Director, and SHS
Administrative Assistant will have access to the files.

Access to Student File
MHS-ND students can request access to their MHS-ND/DI student file and obtain
copies of documents within the files. MHS-ND students should contact the DI Director
to submit a request in writing.

Liability for Safety in Travel
MHS-ND students must provide his/her own transportation to supervised practice
sites and professional meetings. MHS-ND students must carry automobile liability
insurance throughout the program. On the first day of dietetic internship the intern
must submit proof of automobile liability insurance to the Dietetic Internship Director.
The student is responsible for maintaining continuous automobile liability insurance
throughout the duration of the program. The intern is responsible for all liability and
safety in travel to and from assigned facilities.

Injury or Illness Policy while in a Facility for Supervised Practice
In the event of injury or illness while at an assigned supervised practice site, the MHS-
ND student should contact their site supervisor immediately, and then the DI Director
or Clinical Education Coordinator as soon as practical. If an illness or injury requires
the MHS-ND student to leave or miss hours at a facility, it is the student’s responsibility
to contact the site supervisor as soon as possible and arrange a schedule to make up
the missed hours. For an injury while at a supervised practice site, the student should
contact the site supervisor immediately and seek appropriate medical treatment. The
student should follow the policies and procedures of the facility for on-the-job injuries.
Complaints
A student enrolled in the MHS-ND program that has an academic complaint or appeal concerning the program or faculty should follow the informal or formal Western Carolina University Academic Action Appeal policy to resolve the issue. Dialogue should occur with relevant faculty (those directly involved in the complaint or appeal), the DI Director, the ND Clinical Education Coordinator, the Nutrition and Dietetics Program Director, the School of Health Sciences Director, or the Dean of the College of Health Sciences. Information on the Academic Action Appeal policy is available in the undergraduate catalog and can be found at: http://catalog.wcu.edu.

If the complaint is against the MHS-ND program specifically as it relates to ACEND® accreditation standards, policies, and/or procedures, the student should discuss the complaint with the DI Director. If the complaint directly involves the DI Director or satisfactory resolution is unable to be sought through the DI Director, the student should discuss the complaint with the Nutrition and Dietetics Program Director. A written complaint should be completed for purposes of documentation. The written complaint should include:

- Student name and contact information (address, phone number, email address).
- The ACEND® standard, policies, or procedures being violated by the issue.
- The steps already taken to address the issue, including individuals involved.
- A succinct description of the complaint, including individuals involved.
- A succinct description of the outcome(s) desired in resolution.
- Signature of the complainant.

In the event that a student is unable to obtain grievance resolution through the above policies and procedures and the complaint relates to ACEND® accreditation standards, policies, or procedures, the student should submit the complaint in writing directly to ACEND®. Written complaints against the dietetics program should be submitted to ACEND® only after all other options with the program and institution for addressing the complaint have been exhausted. The procedure and related forms for filing a complaint against an accredited program may be found on ACEND®’s website at https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/public-notices-and-announcements/filing-a-complaint-with-acend.

ACEND® may be contacted at:
Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000
Chicago, IL 60606-6995
(800) 877-1600 ext. 5400
Email: acend@eatright.org
Website: www.eatright.org/ACEND
Stop Out Policy
The stop out policy allows delayed admission for newly admitted MHS-ND students. The intent of the policy is to allow MHS-ND students time to participate in rare, unique, and extraordinary opportunities. Unfortunately, some students must delay admission due to unforeseen events, such as medical emergencies, serious health conditions, or United States military orders. A delay of admission will not be approved if a student plans to take courses at another college or university (including military academies). Financial, visa, or flight-booking complications will not be approved either. Each individual’s situation will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The Dietetic Internship Director must approve the request to delay admission. A deferral may be requested for up to one year. A longer delay of admission may be granted to a student whose United States military commitment has been extended for more than 1 year. A delay can be requested only for the same DI program to which the student was admitted.

Admitted students must notify the Dietetic Internship Director of a stop out request as soon as the admitted student knows that a delay of admission will be needed. The request must be made no later than 1 month prior to the beginning of the term to which the student has been admitted. Exceptions may be made in the event of an emergency situation.

Assessment of Student Learning

Dietetic Intern Evaluations
MHS-ND students will be given verbal and written evaluation on a regular, ongoing basis throughout the program. It is the student’s responsibility to be familiar with all evaluation guidelines and forms including the criteria and timing for each evaluation. Evaluations are to be completed by the specified dates. Each practicum will require a mid-point and final evaluation. The lead site preceptor completes the Intern Evaluation Form and discusses the evaluation with the student. The intern, preceptor and Dietetic Internship Director sign the evaluation form. The Dietetic Internship Director provides the appropriate evaluation forms to the preceptor, specifies the dates for evaluation, reviews completed evaluations, and maintains all evaluations in the Intern’s file. Additionally, the MHS-ND student completes self-evaluations regularly throughout the program. For program feedback, MHS-ND students complete an evaluation following each practicum for each supervised practice site. An exit interview in the form of a Qualtrics survey occurs the final week of the dietetic internship program.

Evaluation of Prior Learning
WCU’s MHS-ND (DI) program participates in the Prior Assessed Learning (PAL) program recognized by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND). PAL is designed to grant credit in specific courses or practicum rotations based on the qualified applicant’s previous life experiences. MHS-ND students may be granted prior learning from other programs (i.e. graduate school) or extensive work and volunteer experiences (i.e. foodservice management, WIC
nutritionist, dietetic technician). Supervised-practice activities may be waived for prior learning experience, therefore reducing the required hours of supervised practice.

Guidelines for PAL
- Experiences submitted for PAL must clearly indicate which of the 2017 ACEND competencies (CRDNs) they demonstrate. Credit will only be awarded for learning activities that demonstrate completion of ACEND required competencies.
- Coursework in a DPD program is excluded from PAL.
- PAL applications are only evaluated after the match when an applicant is officially appointed to the WCU Dietetic Internship.
- All documentation must be submitted in a bound folder/portfolio or a single electronic file. Handwritten materials will not be accepted.
- PAL credit will not exceed 3 weeks of the Practicum in Clinical Dietetics, 4 weeks of the Practicum in Community Dietetics, and/or 4 weeks of the Practicum in Administrative Dietetics. Maximum supervised practice time credited to PAL may not exceed 6 weeks in total, and all ACEND competencies must be met.
- Tuition and fees for the internship will remain the same regardless of the amount of PAL credit awarded.
- Submission of an application for PAL does not guarantee that credit will be awarded.

A complete PAL Application must include:
1. PAL Form 1: A completed summary table of all experiences for which PAL is requested.
2. PAL Form 2: Narrative summaries describing each experience submitted on PAL Form 1.
3. Supporting evidence/documentation. All supporting materials that demonstrate achievement of the competencies identified on PAL Form 1 must be provided. Supporting documentation can include, but is not limited to, presentations, publications, reports, and educational materials completed by the applicant. Additional information such as job descriptions and performance evaluations are also useful as supporting evidence.

The deadline for PAL applications and documentation to be received by the WCU MHS-ND Program is November 1st of the first semester enrolled in the MHS-ND program. No late applications will be accepted. The Dietetic Internship Director will evaluate all submitted PAL applications and determine if any credit will be given prior to the start of supervised practice. Calls, emails or letters will be sent to contact persons listed on PAL Form 1 to request verification of the applicant’s documentation of prior learning. Additional documentation or clarification may be requested and must be provided by the applicant in a timely manner. If credit is awarded for PAL, the intern’s schedule will be adjusted to represent the reduction in supervised practice hours.
Supervised Practice Documentation

Per ACEND Standard 10.1d, “Supervised Practice Documentation: The program must establish a procedure for tracking individual intern’s supervised practice hours in profession work settings, simulations, case studies and role playing. Hours granted for prior learning, if granted, also must be documented.”

MHS-ND students are responsible for using the **Supervised Practice Tracking Form** and denoting the type of supervised practice hours (e.g. profession work settings (PWS); simulations (S); case studies (CS); role playing (RP); or prior assessed learning (PAL) on it for EACH type of practicum (clinical, administrative/foodservice, community).

- As applicable, MHS-ND students should denote sick, personal, or adverse weather hours on corresponding days.
- MHS-ND students are expected to share their current Supervised Practice Tracking Form with the DI Director and MHS-ND instructor during practicum courses.
- A completed Supervised Practice Tracking Form is due to the DI Director at the conclusion of EACH practicum.

**Roles and Responsibilities of MHS-ND students (dietetic interns), Supervised Practice Preceptors, and DI Director**

**MHS-ND students (dietetic intern) Roles and Responsibilities**

MHS-ND students will acquire the skills and knowledge to function as an entry-level dietitian or manager in all areas of dietetics. Failure to follow these rules might result in termination from the program.

- Be professional in manner and appearance at all times.
- Represent Western Carolina University in an appropriate manner and appearance when visiting affiliations, class days and field observations.
- Be punctual and available throughout the practicum rotations.
- Complete objectives, learning experiences, reading assignments, and projects by due dates.
- Be prepared for each rotation by reading required texts and articles and by completing worksheets prior to or during each rotation.
- Follow WCU, School of Health Science, including ND and MHS, and supervised practice site policies and procedures.
- Maintain confidentiality of all information discussed within the hospital and department.
- Ask for the preceptor’s approval to leave his/her area of responsibility. Communicate to the practicum instructor when attending meetings or conferences out of the building.
- Inform the preceptor of any change in his/her schedule in a timely manner. Accept any change in the preceptor’s schedule that may arise.
- Maintain respect for positions of authority and follow chain of command.
- Function as a team player.
Seek guidance when needed.
Research and look up information, as needed.
Accept constructive criticism.
Completely accept responsibility for all actions.
Maintain a positive and hard-working attitude.
Maintain open and frequent communication with staff.
Attend all required conferences, meetings, and classes.
Maintain MHS-ND student assignments, forms, projects, etc. in appropriate files.

See Appendix B. for a complete list of Core Competencies for the Registered Dietitian (CRDN). These competencies are established by ACEND for all accredited dietetic internship programs. Achievement of the competencies is measured throughout the dietetic internship program and must be successfully met to obtain a DI verification statement.

**Supervised Practice Preceptor Roles and Responsibilities**
The preceptor is to teach the intern the skills and knowledge required to function as an entry-level dietitian or manager in the preceptor’s area of specialty.
- Orient the intern to the facilities, objectives, learning experiences and due dates.
- Review the schedule and competencies of the rotation with the intern.
- Complete orientation to unit checklist on the first day of the rotation with the Intern.
- Inform other employees of the dates when the Intern will be in his/her area.
- Meet with the Intern at least once each week to discuss projects/concerns.
- Correct, return, and review written projects within one week after receiving them from the intern.
- Complete appropriate Intern evaluation forms by the last day of the rotation. Any deviation from this rule must be pre-approved by the Internship Director.
- Provide immediate positive feedback and constructive criticism throughout the rotation to the intern.
- Give guidance throughout the rotation and especially with written projects to the intern.
- Act as a resource person when the intern has questions.
- Refer the intern to appropriate resources when needed.
- Be aware of MHS-ND policies and procedures.
- Enforce policies and procedures when needed.
- Discipline the intern, as needed.
- Act as a mentor and function as a team player.
- Serve as a role model at all times.
- Empower MHS-ND students to an interdependent, but autonomous, level of function.
- Review, in a timely manner, the intern’s progress with the Dietetic Internship Director at the midpoint and end of the rotation.
- Provide constructive feedback on the Program Evaluation Form.

**Dietetic Internship Director Roles and Responsibilities**
The Dietetic Internship Director is responsible for planning, administration, and evaluation of Western Carolina University's Dietetic Internship Program in coordination with the ND Program Director and Clinical Education Coordinator.

- Develop and update recruitment and application information for prospective students.
- Provide program information and meet with prospective students.
- Orient MHS-ND students to the program.
- Organize supervised practice site rotations and develop schedules.
- Coordinate and communicate with preceptors regarding the objectives, learning experiences, and projects in supervised practice rotations.
- Monitor and evaluate the intern's progress in each rotation throughout the year.
- Provide ongoing support and advice for MHS-ND students. Communicate via telephone, email, scheduled site visits, facilitated meetings, etc.
- Maintain ACEND required student records including student complaints and resolutions, verification statements, and advising plans.
- Serve as a role model and mentor to MHS-ND students.
- Act as a liaison between the preceptor and intern, as needed.
- Serve as an advocate for the intern when appropriate and justified.
- Develop and enforce policies and procedures.
- Direct the application process and selection review of MHS-ND students.
- Enforce the role and responsibilities of both the intern and the preceptor.
- Recruit and orient qualified and appropriate preceptors.
- Facilitate the negotiation of contacts between the ND or MHS program and the supervised practice sites.
- Complete all official forms, submission of fees, studies, reports, RDN exam registration, etc., necessary for maintenance of accreditation.
- Conduct continuous internal and external program evaluations.
- Propose new and/or modification of current curriculum based on the ongoing achievement of student learning outcomes, expected competence of the students, program goals, and changes impacting dietetic practice.
- Assess the progress of the MHS-ND students and the MHS-ND program.
- Propose future goals and implementation plans.

Program Schedule

Selection and Maintenance of Practice Sites
WCU's MHS-ND (Dietetic Internship) Program follows a policy and procedure for selecting and maintaining supervised practice sites and affiliation agreements. Supervised practice site adequacy is based according to the following criteria.

The supervised practice site must:
1. Espouse a philosophy of supervised practice education that is compatible with WCU's MHS-ND (Dietetic Internship) Program.
2. Adhere to legal and ethical guidelines for nutrition and dietetics practice.
3. Value supervised practice education of the MHS-ND students.
4. Provide resources and learning opportunities that allow the MHS-ND students to achieve specific supervised practice learning objectives.
5. Demonstrate a willingness to support timely evaluation of MHS-ND students.
6. Facility preceptors must be licensed, as appropriate, to meet state and federal regulations, or credentialed, as needed, for the area in which they are supervising.
7. Facility preceptors must show evidence of continued competence and currency appropriate to their precepting duties through professional work, graduate education, professional development education, scholarship/research, or other activities leading to professional growth in the advancement of their profession.
8. Facility preceptors must complete WCU MHS-ND Program Preceptor Orientation.

**WCU’s MHS-ND (DI) Program adheres to the following procedure for securing and maintaining affiliation agreements with supervised practice sites:**

Before a MHS-ND student can be placed in a supervised practice site, a written affiliation agreement that formally states the agreed-upon responsibilities of WCU and the respective site must be signed by appropriate individuals with institutionally-assigned signatory authority. Affiliation agreements clarify issues of liability and communication for all parties.

This process begins with the Dietetic Internship Director or Clinical Education Coordinator submitting an Educational Affiliation Agreement Request Form to an Administrative Assistant within the Dean’s office. The College of Health and Human Sciences (CHHS) has a standard affiliation agreement that adheres to the laws of North Carolina and the requirements of WCU legal counsel. Upon receipt of the request to establish a new supervised practice site, an affiliation agreement is drafted and sent to the identified site to obtain appropriate signatures. If a supervised practice site agrees to the standard affiliation agreement, the official representative of the practice site and the Dean of CHHS sign the affiliation agreement. Periodic review of the affiliation agreement occurs as specified in the agreement.

When a supervised practice site amends the affiliation agreement or substitutes its own contract, the amended or new agreement is submitted to the Administrative Assistant of the Dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences for review and approval. Then the agreement is forwarded to WCU legal counsel and those with signatory authority for approval. If either party determines that changes are necessary, a negotiation process occurs. When agreement is reached, official representatives of both parties sign the affiliation agreement.

Once the agreement has been signed, the Administrative Assistant in the Dean’s Office notifies the ND Clinical Education Coordinator and/or DI Director that a new contract is
secured for supervised practice site placement. All affiliation agreements are securely stored in the CHHS Dean’s office. A spreadsheet of current supervised practice sites is maintained for reference. Affiliation agreements are not required for placements within WCU.

Prior to placing students at supervised practice sites, the DI Director and/or Clinical Education Coordinator verifies that there is a signed, current affiliation agreement on record by reviewing the contract spreadsheet and/or through communication with an Administrative Assistant in the Dean’s Office.

Following each supervised practice site placement, MHS-ND students complete a preceptor and site rotation evaluation. This data, along with information gathered during site visits, is utilized by the Dietetic Internship Director to evaluate adequacy and appropriateness of supervised practice facilities.

All programs in WCU’s College of Health and Human Sciences are required to have an affiliation agreement on file prior to placing students at sites; students are not placed in sites without affiliation agreements.

**Program Costs and Fees**

**MHS-ND Program Expenses**
Tuition rates are reviewed and set annually by the North Carolina legislature. The University reserves the right to alter any charges without prior notice. Graduate distance learning tuition and fees per credit hour for in-state and out-of-state rates can be found at this website [https://www.wcu.edu/apply/tuition-and-fees/index.aspx](https://www.wcu.edu/apply/tuition-and-fees/index.aspx).

The below table lists some examples of costs to expect during the MHS-ND program. The below table includes estimations and may change without prior notice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate School Application</td>
<td>$65.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics</td>
<td>$58.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Membership (note: this is a</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>significant discount compared to the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>professional rate)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbooks and Supplies</td>
<td>~$400.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Liability Insurance</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Background Check</td>
<td>$40.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Screen</td>
<td>$38.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Insurance</td>
<td>$1308.00 per</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(max if not covered by Ins.) $140.00</td>
<td>semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immunizations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent, Food, and Gas</td>
<td>Varies per site, preference and commute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition</td>
<td>See WCU graduate school website</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Graduation and Program Completion Requirements**
MHS-Nutrition concentration students complete degree requirements in twenty-two months (or 2 academic years). Supervised practice practicum courses provide 6 hours of graduate credit toward the MHS degree. Graduation degree requirements for WCU can be found in the Graduate Catalog.

To successfully obtain a signed DI completion Verification Statement, MHS-ND students must meet or exceed all of the following criteria:

a. Pass all MHS-ND courses with a “B” or better  
b. Have a 3.0 or better GPA in order to graduate  
c. Complete all Competencies for Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (CRDN)  
d. Complete all assignments/learning outcomes  
f. Turn in all evaluation forms  
h. Complete the required supervised practice hours  
i. Demonstrate satisfactory performance and competence throughout the program rotations as evaluated by site preceptors and Dietetic Internship Director  
j. Complete all program and self-assessments  
k. Uphold code of conduct, academic or non-academic, and perform ethically in accordance with the values of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and Code of Ethics of the Commission on Dietetic Registration.

The intern will receive a Dietetic Internship Verification Statement in-person or via mail within 2 weeks following successful completion of the MHS- Nutrition concentration.

Retention and Remediation Procedures

Program Retention
To remain in the MHS-ND program a student must maintain at least a 3.0 overall GPA, and cannot have a course grade below a “C” once in the MHS-ND cohort. If a student fails to meet the criteria required, MHS-ND faculty advisors will complete an Issue Alert for all students with a grade of less than 75% at the designated grading times. Faculty should also complete an Issue Alert for students with acceptable academic grades but who may be struggling with other issues that may impair overall student success. MHS-ND instructors and/or the DI Director must meet with any student for whom an Issue Alert has been submitted within 1 week to help the student identify appropriate resources and develop an Academic Improvement Plan (AIP). In addition, the MHS-ND student will be counseled into career paths that are appropriate to their ability. MHS-ND students have access to the Center for Career and Professional Development, and WCU Disability Services.

Remediation Procedures
The Dietetic Internship Director, Clinical Education Coordinator, or Preceptor may identify the need for the MHS-ND student remediation at any point during the program.
Practicum evaluation forms align with competencies for the registered dietitian nutritionist (CRDN). When a Preceptor identifies that a dietetic intern is not demonstrating entry level skills on the practicum evaluation form a remediation plan is employed. As described on the practicum evaluation form, remediation plans must be completed prior to granting a recommendation of pass. Plans should identify the specific application of rotation knowledge, professional behavior, ethics, or skills that are deficient and the corresponding activities and assignments that must be completed at a proficient level.

MHS-ND remediation process will be developed in collaboration with the ND Program Director, DI Program Director, Clinical Education Coordinator, and/or Preceptor based upon the deficiency demonstrated by the MHS-ND student. The remediation plan will be documented by the ND Program Director or Clinical Education Coordinator and distributed to the MHS-ND student and to the Preceptor, if needed. Progress to fulfill the remediation plan will be monitored and documented by ND Program Director or Clinical Education Coordinator, and Preceptor, if needed. All documentation is maintained by the DI Director in the MHS-ND student record file.

**Dismissal Procedures**

**Dismissal for Improper Conduct**
The Dietetic Internship Director has an academic, legal, and ethical responsibility to protect members of the public and of the health care community from unsafe or unprofessional conduct. It is within this context that students can be academically sanctioned or dismissed from the MHS-ND program. MHS-ND students are subject to counseling by any preceptor at any time during the program when the intern does not abide by the Western Carolina University policies, procedures, or code of conduct. See WCU student code of conduct at: [https://www.wcu.edu/experience/dean-of-students/student-community-ethics/wcucode.asp](https://www.wcu.edu/experience/dean-of-students/student-community-ethics/wcucode.asp). The ND Program Director will initiate a plan for remediation or dismissal with students who do not comply with the AIP based on the policies established in the MHS-ND Student Handbook.

**Improper Conduct is Defined as:**
1. An act or behavior that violates the Commission on Dietetic Registration Code of Ethics. This code, entitled the Code of Ethics for the Profession of Dietetics is available at: [https://www.eatrightpro.org/practice/code-of-ethics/what-is-the-code-of-ethics](https://www.eatrightpro.org/practice/code-of-ethics/what-is-the-code-of-ethics)
2. An act or behavior which threatens, or has the potential to threaten, the physical, emotional, mental, or environmental safety of the patient/client, family member, another student, faculty member, preceptor, other health care provider, or any other person.
3. An act or behavior which constitutes a practice a student is not prepared or authorized to perform on any other person at the time of the incident.

Dietetic interns must adhere to the Western Carolina University Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct, and WCU and CHHS policies on use of illegal drugs. Academic Honesty Policy: Academic Integrity Policy
WCU Illegal Drugs and Illegal Use or Abuse of Alcohol: University Policy #38
CHHS Alcohol and Drug Testing (see Appendix C.)
Western Carolina University Graduate Catalog: Graduate Catalog (click drop down box to access graduate catalog).

The specific action in response to improper conduct is based upon which rule of conduct was violated and whether or not previous warnings were given for same behavior.

**MHS-ND students may be immediately terminated from the program for unprofessional or unsafe behavior including, but not limited to:**
- Inability to successfully complete required courses
- Repeated poor performance
- Consistent lack of preparation for supervised practice
- Not following instructions as requested
- Habitual absenteeism or tardiness
- Unsafe practice
- Clinical error or poor clinical judgment affecting patient safety
- Inability to cooperate with preceptors, peers, or hospital staff
- Unprofessional or unethical conduct or violating the policies of the internship as set forth in the student handbook
- Two rotation failures
- Failure to pass drug screen or background check or evidence of drug or alcohol abuse
- Performing as an RDN outside the confines of the MHS-ND (Dietetic Internship) Program
- Falsification of records

The process for review of improper conduct is as follows:
1. The site preceptor discusses the misconduct with the intern within two scheduled working days. The preceptor documents each discussion and provides a copy to the Dietetic Internship Director.
2. After an Improper Conduct is submitted, the Dietetic Internship Director meets with the intern to discuss the problem(s) and develop an action plan of corrective action within specific timeframes. The plan of action is documented and filed with the Dietetic Internship Director; a copy is provided to the dietetic intern and the DI Director informs the ND Program Director of the action plan.
3. Failure to comply with the plan of action OR additional offenses within the original plan of action timeframe OR after three separate actions, will result in the MHS-ND student being dismissed from the program. The Dietetic Internship Director and ND Program Director will notify the School of Health Sciences Director and student in writing The School of Health Sciences Director informs the College of Health and Human Sciences Dean of the termination decision. All documentation is kept in the MHS-ND student’s file with the Dietetic Internship Director.

**Withdrawal and Refund Policies**
MHS-ND students may withdraw from the program following term and university policy and deadlines outlined in the university catalog. It is advisable for students to provide written information to the ND Program and Dietetic Internship Director describing the reason for withdrawal and to have a discussion with the DI Director to discuss the situation before requesting formal withdrawal from the university and program. If withdrawal of all courses takes place, students no longer will be enrolled in the MHS-ND program or Dietetic Internship. The MHS-ND student cannot return to the current MHS-ND cohort after withdrawal. Students interested in applying to future MHS-ND cohorts are subject to all admission requirements and program requirements in effect for the semester to which they are re-applying. Students who withdraw will not be able to request that their original offers be reinstated.

Western Carolina University’s Withdrawal/Drop Refund Policy are followed when students withdraw from MHS-Nutrition courses, the DI program, and the university. Western Carolina University’s Withdrawal Policy is available through the Student Accounts Office, Campus Operations and Finance at: https://www.wcu.edu/discover/campus-services-and-operations/student-accounts-office/student-accounts-policies/withdrawal-drop-refund-policy.aspx. Students should take note of withdrawal dates and related reduction of tuition and fee changes on the posted schedules.

**Vacation and Sick Leave**

**Absence Due to Illness or Injury**
MHS-ND students are allowed excused absences due to illness or injury during supervised practice practicum rotations. An absence of more than one day due to illness or injury will require a note from the physician. At the discretion of the preceptor, and ND Clinical Education Coordinator, supervised practice hours lost to illness or injury may need to be made up. If the MHS-ND student is out due to illness or injury, he/she should notify the site preceptor and ND Clinical Education Coordinator for each day of absence. The illness or injury is documented and placed in the MHS-ND student’s file. The MHS-ND student records their absence on the Dietetic Internship Weekly Competency Log. If illness or injury interrupts a rotation for a definite period of time, the Dietetic Internship Director will negotiate an appropriate leave for the intern. This leave must not extend past a two-year limit and must not interfere with rotation schedules of other interns.

**Absence for Bereavement**
The intern is excused for supervised practice days when there is a death of his/her immediate family (partner, child, brother, sister, mother, father, grandparent, grandchild, stepchild, or partner’s parent). The ND Clinical Education Coordinator reserves the right to request valid proof of death and relationship of immediate family member. Any request for additional days of absence is approved by the Dietetic Internship Director as Absences for Personal Reasons. The MHS-ND student is to immediately contact the site preceptor and ND Clinical Education Coordinator when
there is a death of an immediate family member. Supervised practice hours missed for bereavement must be made up if the intern will drop below the required hours of supervised practice.

**Absence for Personal Reasons**
MHS-ND students can request an absence to be excused due to personal reasons. Approval is left to the discretion of the ND Clinical Education Coordinator and Dietetic Internship Director. The intern is required to make up the lost internship time due to personal reasons.

**Vacation and Holiday**
MHS-ND students are entitled to the holidays observed by the university while in non-practicum courses, and holidays observed by the supervised practice site while in practicum courses; MHS-ND students may choose to take vacation during these times. MHS-ND students may be expected to complete supervised practice hours during WCU breaks. At the beginning of the program, the Dietetic Internship Director informs MHS-ND students of the scheduled weeks of vacation and holidays.

**Inclement Weather**
MHS-ND students are expected to attend supervised practice rotations at facilities as scheduled. In the event of inclement weather (e.g. snow or ice) during practicum placement, MHS-ND students should communicate with their preceptors regarding facility or programming closure that could prevent normal activity. In supervised practice settings, each MHS-ND student is considered a non-essential employee and should attend the rotation facility if it is “open for business” for non-essential employees unless the primary site preceptor advises the MHS-ND student differently. MHS-ND students are expected to make up any lost time due to inclement weather.

**Student Support and Tutorial Services**
WCU’s Office of Distance Learning has a comprehensive webpage that outlines the campus services that are available to distance students.

**Financial Assistance**
Various financial sources, such as grants and loans are available to qualified graduate students in the Dietetic Internship Program. To become eligible, an application for financial assistance can be obtained by contacting WCU Financial Aid Office in Room 230 of the Robinson Administration Building, telephone 828-227-7290. Additional information is located on the following website: https://www.wcu.edu/apply/financial-aid/index.aspx. Financial aid recipients are expected to comply with the guidelines established by each specific granting or loaning agency.

**Learning Management System (LMS) Support**
The learning management system support can be found at: tc.wcu.edu, (828) 227-7487, by emailing IT Help Desk at: ithelp@wcu.edu, or visiting the Technology Commons located on the ground floor of the Hunter Library.
Hunter Library/Online Library Services
Hunter Library provides students with access to group and individual study spaces and to thousands of information resources: print and electronic books, newspapers, and scholarly journal articles. These resources can be searched online and often accessed there (http://www.wcu.edu/hunter-library) or can be searched and located in the library building. Students in need of research or library support can get help (http://researchguides.wcu.edu/help) from library staff and subject specialists skilled in their specific disciplines and find resources specific to their disciplines and assignments via the library's research guides (http://researchguides.wcu.edu/).

Research and Instruction Librarian / Liaison to the Health Professions
https://researchguides.wcu.edu/nutrition
Joshua Rakower
jrakower@wcu.edu

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
Western Carolina University is committed to providing equal educational opportunities for students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. Students who require accommodations must identify themselves as having a disability and/or medical condition and provide current diagnostic documentation to the Office of Accessibility Resources. Please contact the Office of Accessibility Resources, 135 Killian Annex (next to One Stop), (828) 227-3886 or by email at accessibility@wcu.edu.

Counseling and Psychological Services
Western Carolina University Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) provides consultations and short-term goal oriented psychological counseling to enrolled students at no cost. Clinicians at CAPS are dedicated to serving WCU students and assisting them in participating fully in their academic, social, and cultural endeavors at WCU. More information can be found here: https://www.wcu.edu/experience/health-and-wellness/caps/index.aspx or by calling 828.227.7469.

WCU Center for Career and Professional Development
Career planning and job searching help is available at http://www.wcu.edu/learn/academic-enrichment/ccpd/. The Center is located on the second floor of Killian Annex. If you are graduating this year and need assistance with job search documents, a career search or major career decision making, the Center is there to assist you. All services are available to students and alumnus, most at no cost. Full time jobs and internships for students are alumni are posted at JobCat 2.0.

IT Services Help Desk
All login and technical problems should be reported to IT Services Help Desk: 828-227-7487, Toll Free: 866-928-7487 or e-mail: ithelp@wcu.edu.

The MHS-ND (DI) Program Handbook, is based on the most recent information and plan for the program. Its content is subject to revision as needed to adapt to new
knowledge or unanticipated events. Updates will remain focused on achieving the program, course objectives, and ACEND guidelines. Preceptors and students will receive notification of such changes by email. Students are responsible for attending to such changes or modifications as distributed by the instructor and posted to the LMS.
Appendix A. Additional Policies and Standards

Equal Opportunity
Western Carolina University is an equal opportunity institution with respect to both education and employment. In accordance with WCU Policy 10 “Policy Statement on Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity,” WCU does not discriminate, or treat people differently on the basis of race; color; religion; sex; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; national origin; age; disability; genetic information; political affiliation; and National Guard or veteran status as required by federal (Title VI, Title IX, Section 504) and state laws and regulations.

Fair Labor Standards
The training given to MHS-ND students is for the benefit of the student. He/she does not displace regular employees. MHS-ND students work under the close supervision of the site preceptor during supervised practice rotations MHS-ND students are aware that he/she is not entitled to wages for the time spent in training nor to a job at the conclusion of the program.

Academic Honesty Policy
Western Carolina University, as a community of scholarship, is also a community of honor. Faculty, staff, administrators, and students work together to achieve the highest standards of honesty and integrity. Academic dishonesty is a serious offense at WCU because it threatens the quality of scholarship and defrauds those who depend on knowledge and integrity.

Honesty and integrity are fundamental values for the dietetics profession and the University. Students will not lie, steal, or cheat in their academic endeavors, nor will the student tolerate the actions of those who do. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of the consequences of violating academic honesty policies and the impact such violations can have on their standing in the MHS-ND Program, the University, and in their careers.

MHS-ND students (dietetic interns) are held to the University’s Academic Honesty Policy, on the web in Academic Integrity Policy. To maintain the public’s trust in dietitians, dishonesty will not be tolerated. Acts of academic dishonesty may result in penalties ranging from a grade of zero on the paper/project/test, or a “U” in a supervised practicum course, to failure of the entire course and immediate dismissal from the program. Consequences will be determined by the Dietetic Internship Director. Circumstances of the act of academic dishonesty and consequent penalties will be documented in the student’s academic file and reported to the School Director, Dean, and the School of Health and Human Sciences Student Affairs Committee in accordance with WCU policy. Students may appeal the Dietetic Internship Director’s decision through the school or graduate school appeals process.

WCU MHS-ND/ DI Program Handbook
Examples of academic dishonesty:

- Cheating: intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials information, or study aids in any academic exercise.
- Fabrication: intentional falsification or invention of information or citation in any academic exercise.
- Plagiarism*: representing the words or ideas of someone else as one’s own in any academic exercise.
- Self-plagiarism: reusing work that you have already published or submitted for a class. It can involve re-submitting an entire paper, copying, paraphrasing passages from your previous work, or recycling old data.
- Facilitation of academic dishonesty: helping or attempting to help someone to commit a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy in any academic exercise (e.g. allowing another person to copy information during an examination)

*Specific guidelines about avoiding plagiarism are available at: https://www.wcu.edu/Plagiarism_2012.pdf#search=avoid%20plagiarism

Congruent with The Record, Graduate Catalog
For specific information on procedures for cases involving allegations of academic dishonesty see WCU Student Handbook
## Appendix B. Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) Competency for Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (CRDN)

### Domain 1: Scientific and Evidence Base of Practice: integration of scientific information and research into practice

| CRDN 1.1 | Select indicators of program quality and/or customer service and measure achievement of objectives. |
| CRDN 1.2 | Apply evidence-based guidelines, systematic reviews and scientific literature. |
| CRDN 1.3 | Justify programs, products, services and care using appropriate evidence or data. |
| CRDN 1.4 | Evaluate emerging research for application in nutrition and dietetics practice. |
| CRDN 1.5 | Conduct projects using appropriate research methods, ethical procedures and data analysis. |
| CRDN 1.6 | Incorporate critical-thinking skills in overall practice. |

### Domain 2: Professional Practice Expectations: beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviors for the professional dietitian level of practice.

| CRDN 2.1 | Practice in compliance with current federal regulations and state statutes and rules, as applicable and in accordance with accreditation standards and the Scope of Nutrition and Dietetics Practice and Code of Ethics for the Profession of Nutrition and Dietetics. |
| CRDN 2.2 | Demonstrate professional writing skills in preparing professional communications. |
| CRDN 2.3 | Demonstrate active participation, teamwork and contributions in group settings. |
| CRDN 2.4 | Function as a member of interprofessional teams. |
| CRDN 2.5 | Assign patient care activities to NDTRs and/or support personnel as appropriate. |
| CRDN 2.6 | Refer clients and patients to other professionals and services when needs are beyond individual scope of practice. |
| CRDN 2.7 | Apply leadership skills to achieve desired outcomes. |
| CRDN 2.8 | Demonstrate negotiation skills. |
| CRDN 2.9 | Participate in professional and community organizations. |
| CRDN 2.10 | Demonstrate professional attributes in all areas of practice. |
| CRDN 2.11 | Show cultural competence/sensitivity in interactions with clients, colleagues and staff. |
| CRDN 2.12 | Perform self-assessment and develop goals for self-improvement throughout the program. |
| CRDN 2.13 | Prepare a plan for professional development according to Commission on Dietetic Registration guidelines. |
| CRDN 2.14 | Demonstrate advocacy on local, state or national legislative and regulatory issues or policies impacting the nutrition and dietetics profession. |
| CRDN 2.15 | Practice and/or role play mentoring and precepting others. |

### Domain 3: Clinical and Customer Services: development and delivery of information, products and services to individuals, groups and communities.

WCU MHS-ND/ DI Program Handbook
| CRDN 3.1 | Perform the Nutrition Care Process and use standardized nutrition language for individuals, groups and populations of differing ages and health status, in a variety of settings. |
| CRDN 3.2 | Conduct nutrition focused physical exams. |
| CRDN 3.3 | Demonstrate effective communications skills for clinical and customer services in a variety of formats and settings. |
| CRDN 3.4 | Design, implement and evaluate presentations to a target audience. |
| CRDN 3.5 | Develop nutrition education materials that are culturally and age appropriate and designed for the literacy level of the audience. |
| CRDN 3.6 | Use effective education and counseling skills to facilitate behavior change. |
| CRDN 3.7 | Develop and deliver products, programs or services that promote consumer health, wellness and lifestyle management. |
| CRDN 3.8 | Deliver respectful, science-based answers to client questions concerning emerging trends. |
| CRDN 3.9 | Coordinate procurement, production, distribution and service of goods and services, demonstrating and promoting responsible use of resources. |
| CRDN 3.10 | Develop and evaluate recipes, formulas and menus for acceptability and affordability that accommodate the cultural diversity and health needs of various populations, groups and individuals. |

**Domain 4: Practice Management and Use of Resources: strategic application of principles of management and systems in the provision of services to individuals and organizations**

| CRDN 4.1 | Participate in management of human resources. |
| CRDN 4.2 | Perform management functions related to safety, security and sanitation that affect employees, customers, patients, facilities and food. |
| CRDN 4.3 | Conduct clinical and customer service quality management activities. |
| CRDN 4.4 | Apply current nutrition informatics to develop, store, retrieve and disseminate information and data. |
| CRDN 4.5 | Analyze quality, financial and productivity data for use in planning. |
| CRDN 4.6 | Propose and use procedures as appropriate to the practice setting to promote sustainability, reduce waste and protect the environment. |
| CRDN 4.7 | Conduct feasibility studies for products, programs or services with consideration of costs and benefits. |
| CRDN 4.8 | Develop a plan to provide or develop a product, program or service that includes a budget, staffing needs, equipment and supplies. |
| CRDN 4.9 | Explain the process for coding and billing for nutrition and dietetics services to obtain reimbursement from public or private payers, fee-for-service and value-based payment systems. |
| CRDN 4.10 | Analyze risk in nutrition and dietetics practice. |

**Title of Concentration Area 1: Nutrition Education**

| CRDN 5.1 | Examine an emerging nutrition topic supported by evidence-based research, prepare and deliver an engaging continuing education session for health professionals that utilizes appropriate technology for presentation delivery. |
| CRDN 5.2 | Provide local food education events for individuals, families, institutions, or communities. |
| CRDN 5.3 | Promote local food education through the integration and marketing of local food in healthy diets and menu... |
Appendix C. WCU College of Health and Human Sciences Drug and Alcohol Policy

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SCIENCES

ALCOHOL AND ILLEGAL DRUG TESTING POLICY FOR STUDENTS

I. University Policy Statement

Western Carolina University (the “University”) is committed to maintaining a drug-free workplace and academic environment in compliance with the federal Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988 and in accordance with University Policy #38, Illegal Drugs, and University of North Carolina Policy 1300.1, Illegal Drugs. Further, the University is committed to provide campus experiences for its students that are safe, legal, and responsible, in accordance with University Policy #81, General Campus Policy for Alcoholic Beverages, and the University Code of Student Conduct.

II. University Interests

The University recognizes its responsibility to provide for a safe learning environment for University students and personnel, as well as a safe clinical/internship setting for patients and employees of affiliated agencies. The use of alcohol and/or drugs, lawfully prescribed or otherwise, which interfere with the student’s judgment or motor coordination poses an unacceptable risk to the aforementioned. For the foregoing reasons, the College has adopted this policy to further the following interests of the University:

1. To prevent the possession, consumption or distribution of illegal drugs, which violates applicable federal and state law, University Policy #38 and/or the University Code of Student Conduct and substantially adversely impacts the efficacy and integrity of the Programs;

2. To promote the safe, legal, and responsible purchase, consumption or possession of alcohol, in accordance with University Policy #81, General Campus Policy for Alcoholic Beverages;

3. To cooperate with affiliated agencies by ensuring, to the extent possible, that students comply with agency policies, rules, and regulations pertaining to the placement of students in clinical/internship experiences, including agency alcohol and drug testing policies;

III. Definitions

1. Drug testing means the scientific analysis of urine, blood, breath, saliva, hair, tissue, and other specimens of the human body for the purpose of detecting an illegal drug or alcohol.
a. Pre-placement drug testing means drug testing conducted prior to a student engaging in a learning experience at an affiliated agency if the agency requests such testing.

b. Reasonable suspicion drug testing means drug testing conducted on a student because individualized and objective evidence exists to support the conclusion that a student (1) has engaged in the use of alcohol and/or illegal drugs in violation of applicable policies, laws, and regulations; or (2) appears to be impaired. Facts that could give rise to reasonable suspicion include, without limitation: observed possession or use of illegal drugs or alcohol; the odor of alcohol or drugs; impaired behavior such as slurred speech; decreased motor coordination; difficulty in maintaining balance; marked changes in personality or academic performance or behavior; reports of observed drug or alcohol use; an arrest or conviction for a drug or alcohol related offense; positive pre-placement or other drug tests; or newly discovered evidence of drug test tampering.

c. Repeat drug testing means a drug test that is repeated following a positive test. This test will be conducted within 5 days following notification of a positive test and will test the broadest spectrum of drugs.

d. Random drug testing means drug testing where employees or students of affiliated agencies are tested randomly at the discretion of the agency without reasonable suspicion.

2. “Impaired” means that a person’s mental or physical capabilities are reduced below their normal levels (with or without any reasonable accommodation for disability). An impaired student, by virtue of his/her use of alcohol or illegal drugs, exhibits deteriorated motor/psychomotor function, reduced conceptual/integrative/synthetic thought processes, and/or diminished judgment and attentiveness compared with previous observations of the student’s conduct and performance. For purposes of this policy, the term impaired shall also mean addiction and/or physical or mental dependence upon alcohol or illegal drugs.

3. “Illegal drugs” means (1) any drug or substance whose use, possession, and manufacture are regulated by the Commission for Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Services pursuant to Article 5 of Chapter 90 of the North Carolina General Statutes (the “Controlled Substances Act”); or (2) a drug whose use is strictly controlled by a physician’s prescription or other order.

4. “Program” means all degree granting programs in the CHHS.

5. Each program will have one or more “Program Designees” that will oversee student affairs issues.

IV. College Procedural Requirements

A. Prohibited Conduct and Duty to Notify of Charges/Convictions

1. All conduct specified in University Policy 38 Illegal Drugs and Illegal Use or Abuse of Alcohol (Policy 38) and University Policy 81 Alcoholic Beverages (Policy 81) is expressly
prohibited. The terms of Policy 38 and Policy 81 shall be made a part of this policy. Nothing in
this policy shall be construed to limit or otherwise constrain the terms of Policy 38 or Policy 81.

2. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to limit or constrain the terms of any agency drug
testing policy or scheme.

3. Under no circumstance should a student participate in Program courses or educational
experiences while he/she is impaired.

4. Under no circumstance should a student manufacture, consume, possess, sell or
distribute illegal drugs or alcohol in violation of applicable federal and state laws and/or
applicable Program and University policies, including the University Code of Student Conduct.

5. Students have an affirmative duty under this policy to report any criminal charges,
convictions or plea agreements that are related to the manufacture, use, possession, sale or
distribution of an illegal drug, or to the purchase, consumption or possession of an alcoholic
beverage. Such violations, if substantiated, will result in disciplinary action, up to and including
dismissal from the Program, in accordance with established Program disciplinary policies and
procedures. Such violations may also result in a referral to the Department of Student
Community Ethics ("DSCE") for investigation and University discipline if warranted.

6. A student who violates any provision of this Section IV.A will be deemed to be unable to
meet the essential functions and technical standards of their Program and will be subject to
disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the Program.

7. A student should be aware that a positive drug test may impede his/her ability to part-take
in clinical/internship experiences and therefore may impede his/her ability to progress in a
Program.

B. Agreement to Submit to Drug and Alcohol Testing

1. A student entering or progressing in a Program that requires a drug test(s) as a condition
of enrollment must submit to the said drug testing as required by the Program.

2. A student participating in a Program must agree to submit to pre-placement drug testing;
reasonable suspicion drug testing when circumstances warrant such testing; and/or repeat drug
testing as required by the Program.

3. All students shall sign an acknowledgment and consent form (Attachment A) that
evidences the student’s consent to: (a) comply with University, College, and Program policies
pertaining to alcohol and illegal drugs; (b) comply with all policies and regulations of affiliated
agencies pertaining to alcohol and illegal drugs; (c) submit to all drug testing as described in this
policy; and (d) authorize the disclosure of drug testing results to the Dean of the College of
Health and Human Sciences (CHHS) or his/her designee. Refusal to sign the acknowledgment
and consent form shall be grounds for non-placement in clinical/internship experiences and
subsequent dismissal from the Program.

C. Actions Following Positive Drug Tests

WCU MHS-ND/ DI Program Handbook
1. Upon receipt of a positive drug test, the Dean of College of CHHS or his/her designee shall inform the Program Designee of the positive drug test, the student who received the positive test, as well as any other information needed to evaluate the positive drug test.

   The Program Designee shall notify the student in writing of the result of the drug test as well as any disciplinary action imposed. Any repeat drug test shall be conducted by a mutually agreed upon qualified vendor and all costs of the repeat test shall be borne by the student.

   If a student chooses to submit to a repeat drug test, any appeal time-line designed in this policy shall be stayed until the Program Designee notifies the student of the result of the repeat drug test.

   A student who receives a positive drug test, or a positive repeat drug test, will be subject to disciplinary action.

2. Disciplinary action at the Program level for a positive drug test will be decided by a designated group of Program faculty and may include dismissal from the Program. Program level disciplinary action may be appealed pursuant to Section E of this policy.

3. A positive drug tests may also be referred to Department of Student Community Ethics (DSCE) for investigation pursuant to the Western Carolina University Student Code of Conduct (Code).

4. Students that are dismissed from the University are dismissed from the Program.

5. Any attempt to tamper with, contaminate or switch a sample during any drug test will result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the Program and will be referred to the DSCE for investigation pursuant to the Code.

6. If a student is permitted to continue in the Program following a positive drug test result, the agency that required the test may handle the issue according to its policy. In the event that the agency refuses to permit the student to continue with the agency an alternative placement will be sought; however, if placement cannot be found the student may not be able to progress through the program, depending on the program’s requirements.

   D. Dilute Negative Drug Test results

   Students may be asked to repeat a “dilute negative” drug screen result at the discretion of the clinical facility, and/or the College unit.

   E. Program Appeal

1. A student who wishes to appeal the decision of the Program have the option to do so in writing to the Dean of CHHS within five (5) days of notification as specified in Section C.1.

2. The Dean may request in writing supportive information from the student, which must be provided within 5 days of the Dean’s request.
3. The Dean will decide on the case within five (5) days of receiving all requested information.

4. The Dean may base his decision on any or all information provided and/or learned through investigation conducted him/her self or others.

5. In order to maintain an appeal, a person must remain a student in good standing of the university. All appeal rights terminate with the loss of student status.

F. Pre-Placement Drug and Alcohol Testing

1. Pre-placement drug testing will be coordinated through students’ Program and will be conducted by a qualified vendor or as determined by the affiliated agency. The cost of all drug testing shall be borne by the student, unless it is otherwise provided by the affiliated agency. Any positive pre-placement drug test shall be evaluated pursuant to this policy.

2. If a student is permitted to continue in the Program following a positive pre-placement drug test result, the agency that required the test will handle the issue according to its policy. In the event that the agency refuses to permit the student to work with the agency an alternative placement will be sought; however, if placement cannot be found the student may not be able to progress through the program, depending on the program’s requirements.

G. Reasonable Suspicion Drug and Alcohol Testing

1. Reasonable suspicion drug testing may be conducted when individualized and objective evidence exists to support the reasonable suspicion that a student (1) has engaged in the use of alcohol and/or illegal drugs in violation of applicable policies, laws, and regulations; or (2) appears to be impaired.

2. Evidence of a student’s use of alcohol and/or illegal drugs or impairment may be provided by any individual, including employees of affiliated agencies.

3. The determination of whether or not reasonable suspicion testing is warranted shall be made by an agency, or by the Program Designee and Dean of CHHS.

4. Reasonable suspicion drug testing will be coordinated through the student’s Program Designee, and the cost of drug testing shall be borne by the student.

V. Confidentiality

All drug testing results shall be used, maintained, and disclosed by the College and/or University only as permitted by and in strict compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations pertaining to confidential and protected health information and student records.
Attachment A
WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
College of Health and Human Sciences
Acknowledgement and Consent Form

Students in the Programs shall be familiar with applicable legal and ethical requirements set forth in state licensure laws and regulations pertaining to healthcare professions and occupations.

I have read and understand the College of Health and Human Sciences Alcohol and Illegal Drug Testing Policy for Students (“Policy”). I also have had an opportunity to ask questions about the Policy.

By my signature below, I agree to comply with the requirements of this Policy, and all applicable policies and regulations of the University and affiliated agencies. Further, as a condition of participation in the Program, I knowingly and voluntarily consent to submit to any drug testing required by the University, College, or Program, or any requisite pre-placement drug testing or random drug testing required by an affiliated clinical agency.

I hereby authorize the disclosure of any and all drug testing results to the Dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences or his/her designee.

I hereby agree, for myself and on behalf of my successors, heirs, and assigns, to hold harmless and waive any and all claims and release, satisfy, and forever discharge Western Carolina University and its trustees, officers, and employees, and the University of North Carolina and its governors, officers, and employees from any and all actions, claims, damages, judgments, demands, rights, and causes of action of whatever kind or nature, arising out of or in connection with the College’s, Program’s, and University’s administration of the Policy.

_________________________________________  _______________________
Student Signature                        Date

_________________________________________
Printed Name

WCU MHS-ND/ DI Program Handbook