

**Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD)  
Student Handbook**



**School of Health Sciences  
College of Education, Health and Human Services**

**Revised: Summer 2022  
Based on the ACEND 2022 Accreditation Standards  
Program Accredited by: Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and  
Dietetics**

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## Introduction

Welcome to Kent State University's Nutrition program! The Nutrition Program is housed in the College of Education, Health, and Human Services as part of the School of Health Sciences. The program is housed in Nixon Hall on the Kent State University Main Campus. This program is the first step necessary to become a Registered Dietitian.

A Registered Dietitian (RD) or Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) is an individual who has completed the following requirements which are available at the following weblink as well:

<https://www.eatrightpro.org/about-us/become-an-rdn-or-dtr/high-school-students/5-steps-to-become-a-registered-dietitian-nutritionist>

1. Complete a bachelor's degree and receive a verification statement from an ACEND-accredited DPD program or prerequisites necessary to apply to a Graduate Program in Nutrition and Dietetics.
2. Complete an ACEND-accredited supervised practice **dietetic internship program**. A graduate degree is required before taking the dietetic registration exam. There are options to combine supervised practice with a graduate degree.
3. Pass the Commission on Dietetic Registration's Dietetic Registration exam.
4. Gain licensure in your state of practice, if applicable.
5. Maintain continuing education.

\*From: <https://www.eatrightpro.org/about-us/become-an-rdn-or-dtr/high-school-students/5-steps-to-become-a-registered-dietitian-nutritionist>

The state of Ohio as well as most other states also have a certification or license requirement to practice dietetics. Each state requirement is different, and information can be found on the state dietetic association website. The following is the example link for the State Board of Dietetics: <https://med.ohio.gov/Apply/Dietitian-LD>.

Dietetics is a very challenging, but rewarding profession that applies the science of food and nutrition to the health and well-being of individuals and the community. The Didactic program in Dietetics (DPD) at Kent State University (undergraduate program) is a science-based program that is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) (<https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend>) of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (<http://www.eatrightpro.org>), 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite, 2000, Chicago, IL 60606 (phone: 312-899-0030 ext. 5400; [education@eatright.org](mailto:education@eatright.org)). The Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) is the Academy's accrediting agency for education programs preparing students for careers as Registered Dietitians (RDNs) and Dietetic Technicians, Registered (NDTR). ACEND is recognized by the United States Department of Education as a Title V gatekeeper as is also a member of the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA).

RDNs are typically employed in hospitals and other health care facilities, government and public health agencies, the food industry, schools and universities, private practice, health and wellness institutions and businesses, sports nutrition, as well as other unique healthcare and industry opportunities. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports (<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/Healthcare/Dietitians-and-nutritionists.htm>) the need for RD/RDNs will continue to grow at the same rate or greater rate than other healthcare professions due to the

increased emphasis on prevention, the increase in the aging population, as well as the public interest in nutrition.

RDN salaries median income as reported in 2021 is approximately \$70,000 per year. Salaries increase with experience in the field. More information about compensation and benefits can be found at: [https://www.jandonline.org/article/S2212-2672\(21\)01258-2/pdf#:~:text=The%20median%20hourly%20wage%20among,of%20approximately%20%2470%2C000%20per%20year](https://www.jandonline.org/article/S2212-2672(21)01258-2/pdf#:~:text=The%20median%20hourly%20wage%20among,of%20approximately%20%2470%2C000%20per%20year)

### **Mission Statement**

**Mission:** The Kent State University's Didactic Program in Dietetics mission is to provide students with a broad general education with a strong foundation in nutrition/dietetics and the sciences. The emphasis will be on providing a program that integrates theory, research, and application of knowledge to the profession of dietetics resulting in successful students and graduates for all backgrounds, including race, ethnicity, national origin, gender/gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, size, socioeconomic status, and age.

The program will meet all University, College, and School requirements as well as incorporate the professional knowledge requirements of the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education. Completion of the program will result in the awarding of the Bachelor of Science degree in Nutrition and the DPD verification statement.

### **DPD Program Goals and Objective Measures**

**Goal #1:** To prepare individuals to become registered dietitians through the combination of their undergraduate degree program followed by successful completion of a supervised practice experience and the registration examination.

Objectives:

- At least 80% of students complete program requirements within 3 years (150% of planned program length)" (This is starting at the Junior year of coursework).
- At least 50 percent of program graduates apply for admission to a supervised practice program prior to or within 12 months of graduation.
- Of program graduates who apply to a supervised practice program, at least 70 percent are admitted within 12 months of graduation.
- 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%.

**Goal #2:** To prepare graduates for advanced graduate or professional study or employment matching their individual interests.

- Students, internship directors and/or preceptors, graduate school coordinators are satisfied (average score of a 3 on a 5pt Likert scale) with their own or student's ability to perform in their selected professional track 12 months post-graduation.

Program outcomes data are available upon request.

## **Admission Requirements**

The admission process to Kent State University Freshman and transfer students is described on the university website: <https://www.kent.edu/admissions>. If a student already has a degree in another field or are a transfer student and is interested in becoming a Registered Dietitian, please contact the DPD Director, Dr. Natalie Caine-Bish for a transcript evaluation (i.e., 330-672-2148; [ncaine@kent.edu](mailto:ncaine@kent.edu)) and apply to the university as a post-undergraduate student after having an advising appointment at Kent State University.

## **Transfer and Change of Major Transcript Evaluations**

Students transferring from another institution wishing to complete their Bachelor of Science in Nutrition may transfer equivalent coursework from another university to meet requirements within the major, but the courses must transfer in either as equivalent courses to the university or be reviewed by the DPD director for substitution. A university transcript review is the first step of the transfer process. If a course directly transfers as an equivalent by university policy, then the course is automatically counted as the same course for the nutrition program. If a course is not transferred in as equivalent, a transcript review by the DPD director must be completed to determine appropriate course substitutions. Courses that are substituted must be of the same level or greater than the required course at Kent State University. The transcript review by the DPD director, may also require the use of syllabi for coursework from programs that are unfamiliar to the director. Just as with direct transfer of coursework by the university, 75% of the content in the substituted courses, but be the same as the course being substituted.

Current students who wish to transfer coursework into the university from another institution must obtain approval per university policy prior to taking the course. The course must be an equivalent substitution. On the rare occasion that the course is not deemed a direct substitution by the university, the DPD director will review the course and deem the course appropriate substitution. Nutrition coursework for current majors cannot be taken at another institution. Only coursework that falls outside of the nutrition coursework requirements may be substituted (i.e., Kent Core requirements, electives, or prerequisites) for current majors.

Students with a previous undergraduate degree can petition to have courses previously completed to substitute for equivalent coursework required for the verification statement through a transcript review by the DPD director. In the case that a nutrition course is substituted for a transfer student to receive a verification statement must successfully complete all required assignments associated with each KRDN even if they are not taking the course. The means that if there is a nutrition course that is substituted and it contains KRDNs, the student must score at least a 70% on all assignments linked to a KRDN. If a student has not met this threshold, then the student can resubmit the assignment until a 70% is attained. The substitution of a course will only occur if the course syllabus meets the same information and objectives as the Kent State University course, which is Kent State University internal substitution policy set forth by the Provost's office.

## **Tuition & Fees**

Tuition and fees for the university and coursework can be found at: <https://www.kent.edu/financialaid>. It is recommended that students hold a student membership with the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics by junior status (\$58/year), but it is recommended to become a member as soon as a student is financially able. The link is: <https://www.eatrightpro.org/membership/membership-types-and-criteria/student-member>. Yearly

there are also student fees for the nutrition program which are part of your tuition for Kent State University <https://www.kent.edu/financialaid/tuition-and-other-costs>.

It may be expected for lab service-learning experiences that students have to travel off campus. Furthermore, it is highly recommended that students engage in volunteer experiences outside of class to increase the potential of obtaining an internship. Many of these experiences will be reachable by walking or the Portage County Bus system, which is free for Kent State students.

Application fees and mailing costs for graduate programs, internship applications will vary by program. For those applying to dietetic internship programs, (<https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/accredited-programs/about-accredited-programs>) , the DICAS Application (<https://dicas.liaisoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login>). Fee is \$50.00 for the first application and \$25 for each additional application. The D & D Digital computer matching for internship is \$55.

### **Withdrawal and Tuition Refund**

Withdrawal can occur up to 10 weeks into the semester. Please see the instructions: <https://www.kent.edu/registrar/how-withdraw> . There are specific dates for refunds for each semester/session. Please see the following link: <https://www.kent.edu/bursar/student-refund-processing>.

### **Curriculum**

The DPD program at Kent State University meets the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) Foundation Knowledge and Learning Outcomes. The Bachelor of Science in Nutrition provides students with a broad general education and a strong foundation in nutrition, dietetics and the sciences. The emphasis is integrating theory, research and application of knowledge to the profession of dietetics. The curriculum meets the Didactic Program in Dietetics requirements of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, and graduates are eligible for admission to accredited internships. The faculty has expertise in nutritional sciences, exercise science, clinical and community practice and leadership studies. The curriculum (<http://catalog.kent.edu/colleges/eh/hs/nutrition-bs/#roadmaptext> ) is developed to be sequential so that students move from basic knowledge to applied knowledge, skills, and experiences. It is imperative that students follow the Nutrition Roadmap.

### **GPA Requirements**

The overall GPA requirement for graduation is 2.0 with a 2.25 GPA in major coursework. Major courses are defined in the Nutrition Roadmap. All Kent State University students must receive a C or better in the Writing Intensive Course (WIC) for graduation. Each semester, the professional advisors (Keya Jennings) oversee if students are maintaining the minimum grade requirements through an academic alert system. If a student is not meeting the requirements, the student is placed on academic probation is at risk of dismissal if the student's grades don't improve. Academic probation and dismissal are overseen by the University and the College of Education, Health and Human Services. Advising notes are shared between academic advisors and professional advisors to maintain consistency in career planning and major progression. Please review the policy regarding academic probation <http://catalog.kent.edu/academic-policies/dismissal-appeal-reinstatement-undergraduate/>.

It should be noted that because of the very competitive nature of internship program selection it is **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED** to achieve a GPA that is competitive which means striving for a overall **GPA of over a 3.0** would be advantageous especially with the necessary requirement of graduate school to become a registered dietitian. There is no guarantee of obtaining a dietetic internship or graduate school regardless of GPA because of the varying requirements between programs and institutions. Students who are not meeting the suggested GPA are advised each semester of other majors and career opportunities available to them if they either do not apply to a supervised practice program or do not get accepted to graduate school and/or a supervised practice program.

### **Additional Policies and Procedures of Kent State University and the DPD program**

- **Withdrawal and refund of tuition and fees.** Kent State University has established deadlines and dates and procedures for withdrawal and refund of tuition and fees. See the KSU website at: <https://www.kent.edu/bursar/student-refund-processing> for details.
- **Scheduling a program calendar.** The nutrition program follows the KSU academic calendar which is available on the KSU website: <https://www.kent.edu/academic-calendar> . Leave of absences are not necessary at the undergraduate level. Any student can recontinue their degree after taking time off from the degree. Withdrawal requirements can be found here (<https://www.kent.edu/policyreg/operational-procedures-and-regulations-regarding-withdrawal-university> ).
- **Protection of privacy of information (confidentiality of student records).** Kent State University is in accordance with the State University System rules, state statutes, and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 assures the confidentiality of student educational records. However, student educational records may be released without the student's consent to school officials who have legitimate educational interest to access the records and the university may disclose information from a student's educational record to either individuals or entities permitted under applicable federal and state law. Information on confidentiality of records is available in the KSU undergraduate catalog (<https://www.kent.edu/registrar/student-records-policy-ferpa>).
- **Access to personal files.** Students have the right to review their personal educational records for information and to determine accuracy. Information is available on the Kent State University website (<https://www.kent.edu/registrar/student-records-policy-ferpa>).
- **Access to student support services, including health services** (<https://www.kent.edu/uhs>) **counseling services** (<https://www.kent.edu/caps>), **testing** (<https://www.kent.edu/sas>), and **financial aid resources** (<https://www.kent.edu/financialaid>). The Kent State University website has a continually updated resource list for students available at: <https://www.kent.edu/student-services>.
- **University Attendance Policy.** Regular attendance in class is expected of all students at all levels at the university. While classes are conducted on the premise that regular attendance is expected, the university recognizes certain activities, events, and circumstances as legitimate reasons for absence from class. This policy provides for accommodations in accordance with federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination, including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. §794, and its implementing regulation, 34 C.F.R. Part 104; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C.



§12131 et seq., and its implementing regulations, 28 C.F.R. Part 35; as well as university policy 5-16. This policy describes the procedures for requesting and responding to legitimate absences. General procedures and responsibilities for requesting and determining legitimate class absence:

Students shall:

- (a) Follow the documentation procedures set forth.
- (b) Notify their instructors as soon as possible of class absences.

The full attendance policy can be found at: <https://www.kent.edu/policyreg/administrative-policy-regarding-class-attendance-and-class-absence> .

- **Student Accessibility Services.** The Nutrition Program follows all policies and procedures of the university regarding Student Accessibility Services. All information regarding Student Accessibility Services: <https://www.kent.edu/sas>

- **Student Grievances.** There are two different types of grievances that students enter: nonacademic and academic grievances which the policy can be found at: <https://www.kent.edu/policyreg/operational-policy-regarding-general-nonacademic-grievance-procedure-students> & <https://www.kent.edu/policyreg/administrative-policy-and-procedure-student-academic-complaints>. The DPD director will provide you with information regarding the formal university grievance process. You may also contact the student ombuds at <https://www.kent.edu/studentlife/student-ombuds-0> if you have questions or concerns about the grievance policy at Kent State University.

If the complaint cannot be resolved at the university level, the student may contact ACEND for complaints regarding ACEND Standards. Information on how to contact ACEND with complaints can be found on Kent State University's nutrition and dietetic program website as well as at the following link: <https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend>

- **Assessment prior learning.** Prior coursework must be submitted to the VACCA Office for Student Services in the College of Education, Health and Human Services and the DPD Director for review. **The KSU DPD program does not accept prior work or volunteer experience in lieu of coursework.** Coursework will be assessed via the transcript evaluation by the both the VACCA office and the DPD director for courses required for the verification statement. General education requirements/university requirements will be evaluated by the VACCA office. Syllabi may be required to be submitted for complete assessment of previous course objectives. A prospective student will be notified if course(s) will transfer and be provided with a plan of coursework required to complete the KSU DPD program. See page 6 for additional information about the substitution policies.

- **Hold Harmless.** The university, college, school and program area hold no responsibility for transportation, injuries, and or illnesses for on or off campus issues. The following form is filled out for all activities held off-campus (<https://www.kent.edu/generalcounsel/hold-harmless-release-and-assumption-risk>).

- **Assessment of Student Learning.** The transcript is an accurate and complete historical record of work attempted at the university. Changes to transcript entries that alter the enrollment history of a student are not to be made. Students grades are reported on a semester basis using the following instructions (<https://www.kent.edu/registrar/fall-midterm-and-final-grades> ). Freshman ranked students also receive midterm grades from their instructors. All

grades can be viewed by students on Flashline. Students in major courses will have multiple assignments/assessments/projects in each course as denoted on the syllabus. Individual assignment/assessment/project grades can be found on the Canvas course site. The Canvas site can be found either on the top toolbar on Flashline. Grade policy and procedures can be found at the following link <https://catalog.kent.edu/academic-policies/grading-policies-procedures/>.

**Academic Success.** All students at Kent State University have opportunities for assistance not only with particular courses through tutoring at the university (<https://www.kent.edu/asc/univ-tutoring>), but also have resources within the College of Education, Health, and Human Services such as student course, academic coaching, and peer-mentoring (<https://www.kent.edu/ehhs/voss>).

**Disciplinary/termination procedures.** Students are required to follow the KSU Student Code of Conduct found on the university website: <http://www.kent.edu/studentconduct/code-student-conduct>. If a student does not progress in at the university, the student's enrollment at the university may be terminated. <http://catalog.kent.edu/academic-policies/not-permitted-continue/>

**Advising.** Students with the rank of freshmen, sophomores or juniors are **required** to meet with an advisor each semester before they can register for classes and assess student standing and current academic success and deficiencies. All other students are strongly encouraged to meet with an advisor each semester.

Student may schedule an advising appointment at the following link with a College advisor (<https://www.kent.edu/ehhs/voss/advising-0>) or may meet with faculty advisors Dr. Caine-Bish ([ncaine@kent.edu](mailto:ncaine@kent.edu)) or Dr. Miracle ([amiracle@kent.edu](mailto:amiracle@kent.edu)) for an advising appointment based on their semester office hour schedule. The professional advisor for the nutrition majors at the college is Keya Jennings ([kjennin@kent.edu](mailto:kjennin@kent.edu)).

**Graduation and/or DPD completion requirements.** The DPD follows the same graduation requirements as the university and must complete coursework with an overall GPA of 2.0 and a 2.25 major GPA requirements.

**Verification Statement.** In order to receive a verification statement from KSU DPD program, students must:

1. Meet every KRDN requirement.
2. The proficiency of at least a grade C must be obtained for all KRDN based assessments. A standard measurement/assessment tool (i.e, rubric, grading key, etc.) to grade proficiency will be used for every KRDN being assessed. Remediation for all KRDN linked assignments will be required.
3. Remediation in the form of completing any assignment attached to a KRDN that is not at least a C grade on the first attempt will be required until a C grade is reached. The first attempt will be the grade used for the calculation for the semester course grade. It is required by the student to contact the professor when a KRDN assessment grade is not met.

At the completion of the DPD program, all students should contact the DPD director with post-graduation plans and to obtain a verification statement. **This is the responsibility of the student.** After graduation and verification by the registrar, the students will be issued a certified electronic copy of the verification statement via their Kent State University email address. The verification statement should be kept in a safe place as they may be needed for future program, registration, and/or licensure requirements.

**Program Completion and Financial Aid.** Undergraduate students pursuing a bachelor's degree may be considered for financial aid to a maximum of 180 overall attempted hours. Undergraduate students pursuing an associate degree may be considered for federal financial aid to a maximum of 97 overall attempted hours. Students pursuing an undergraduate certificate may be considered for federal aid to a maximum of 29 overall attempted hours.

Students must complete their program within 150% of the published length of the program. A student is ineligible when it becomes mathematically impossible for them to complete the program within the maximum timeframe established by the school. Students who lose student aid eligibility due to this standard can regain eligibility for financial aid by submitting a successful SAP Appeal.

Overall attempted hours include overall institution attempted hours plus overall transfer hours. All attempted hours are included in the calculation even if the student changes majors.  
(<http://www.sfa.kent.edu/DownloadForms/SAPPolicy.asp> )

**Scholarships.** Scholarships are available within the major and the college and information for scholarships is available on the college website at: <http://www.kent.edu/ehhs/scholarships> and at the university website at: <http://www.kent.edu/financialaid/scholarships>.

**Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Membership.** It is recommended that students become members of the Academy at least by junior year. Registration information can be found at: <http://www.eatrightpro.org/resources/membership/membership-types-and-criteria/student-member>. It is also recommended to participate in the local chapters of the Academy. Two active local chapters of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is the Greater Cleveland Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and the Stark County Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

**Student Dietetic Association.** It is recommended to join the student dietetic association as soon as becoming a nutrition major. Emily Baker is the faculty advisor for the student association and can be reached at [ebaker9@kent.edu](mailto:ebaker9@kent.edu)

There is a nominal yearly membership fee.

### **Potential Costs During the Program**

University costs can be found at the following link:

<https://www.kent.edu/financialaid/tuition-and-other-costs>

Students who decide to engage in volunteer and laboratory activities outside of academic coursework may be required to obtain a BSCII background check, which can be obtained on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of White Hall in the Institutional Resource Center. The background check is \$50 and typically takes 2 weeks to obtain results.

Students who decide to engage in volunteer and laboratory activities off campus will need access to transportation.

### **Recommendations of Becoming a Successful Dietetic Student.**

- Nutrition majors are expected to follow the professional code of ethics set by the academy of nutrition and dietetics: <https://www.eatrightpro.org/practice/code-of-ethics> To be successful in the field of dietetics, it is advantageous to maintain a high GPA.
- It is expected by the time of graduation students have accrued experience in the field which can include volunteer or paid experiences. Examples of experiences which can include: Student Dietetic Association student engagement projects, Campus Kitchen, Center for Nutrition Outreach experiences, National Nutrition Month as well as work experience within the field such as dietary aide, student dietary assistant, nutrition assistant.

### **Process of becoming a Registered Dietitian.**

Completion of the Didactic Program in Dietetics at Kent State University does not qualify you to automatically apply for registration as a dietitian. **This is only the FIRST step in the process of becoming a RD/RDN.** There are a number of pathways to becoming an RDN. Please see the following link for more details: <https://www.eatrightpro.org/about-us/become-an-rdn-or-dtr/high-school-students/5-steps-to-become-a-registered-dietitian-nutritionist#:~:text=RDNs%20work%20in%20a%20variety,passing%20the%20national%20registration%20examination.>

Receiving an internship is a very competitive process and obtaining a degree in the KSU didactic program **DOES NOT** guarantee placement into an internship. Remember **a graduate degree as well as supervised practice as well as passing the registration exam are required to become a registered dietitian.**

### **Improving the opportunity to successfully matching to a dietetic internship program.**

- Research programs early. Understand the process and meet with nutrition faculty with any questions concerning the process and the expectations of obtaining an internship. Chose programs that match professional goals as well as academic and professional abilities.
- Maintain a competitive GPA.
- Obtain experience in the field including, but not limited to: hospital, foodservice, nursing home, community nutrition programs, and hunger outreach initiatives. Vary your experiences and try to obtain both paid and unpaid.
- Participate in leadership activities.
- Get to know the nutrition faculty and maintain professionalism throughout an academic career. Nutrition faculty will be writing recommendation letters for the internship application process.
- Apply to more than one program.
- Apply to programs in which you meet the program requirements.

## **Non-KSU Dietetic Intern Policy**

- Faculty (Tenure Track and Non-Tenure Track) within the nutrition program are under no obligation to act as preceptors for Non-KSU dietetic interns. Kent State University nutrition faculty will not act as a preceptor for any non-KSU dietetic intern.

### **In the event a student does not match to an internship program.**

The selection process for dietetic internship is very competitive and a strong application does not mean automatic acceptance into an internship program. If a student does not match, he/she should contact the DPD Director for assistance in other potential opportunities to obtain a dietetic internship such as (second match openings and/or ISPP programs). This is also a time for a student to reflect on credentials and identify strengths and weaknesses of the application file and how to improve the application for the next round.

### **If a student is not interested in the dietetic internship program.**

Some students decide for whatever reason not to apply for an internship after graduation. Graduates with a B.S. in nutrition can pursue careers in nutrition education (For example, WIC, local health departments), nutritional and pharmaceutical sales, product development, foodservices management, public policy, industry related to nutrition, and other health related fields. Students can also apply to become a Registered Dietitian Technician Nutritionist. Application materials and information are available through the DPD Director or at: <https://www.cdrnet.org/certifications/dietetic-technician-registered-dtr-certification>.

Some students decide to apply to graduate school and receive a master's degree in either nutrition or a parallel field such as health education, public health, business, exercise science, health communication. Check with the graduate programs of interest to see application requirements such as take the GRE exam.