

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF NUTRITION

Master of Science in Nutrition + Supervised Practice (MSDI)
and Standalone Supervised Practice (DI) Programs

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

The University of Massachusetts Amherst offers two tracks to becoming a registered dietitian: (1) the standalone supervised practice program (also referred to as the dietetic internship or DI in this document), and (2) the master's degree + supervised practice program (MSDI). The DI program follows the same requirements for both tracks and is a 32 week program providing the practical experiential learning necessary to prepare and qualify dietetic students/interns (the terms *students* and *interns* are used interchangeably in this document) to take the nationally administered Commission on Dietetics Registration (CDR) credentialing examination (also referred to as the "RD exam"). The MSDI track has two pathways further described in this document: (1) Accelerated (4+1) MSDI, and (2) MSDI. Graduates of the both programs meet the supervised practice experience required to apply for state licensure in MA and other states. For more information on licensure visit "Pathway to RD/RDN and Licensure."

The philosophy of the UMass Amherst program is based on the recognition that there is a need for broadly trained dietitians, and most students benefit from exposure to a wide variety of practice settings before deciding where to specialize. Our program strives to provide an opportunity for students to participate in a variety of supervised practice experiences that will form the broad basis for a career in any segment of the nutrition and dietetics field.

University Mission: The University's mission is to provide an affordable and accessible education of high quality and to conduct programs of research and public service that advance knowledge and improve the lives of the people of the Commonwealth, the nation, and the world.

Program Mission: The UMass Amherst Dietetic Internship is dedicated to providing accessible, high-quality education in the preparation of competent registered dietitians/nutritionists committed to serving their communities and their profession as it evolves in the 21st century.

Program Goals and Objectives

#1: Prepare graduates to become competent entry-level dietitians.

- Objective 1.1: At least 80 percent of program interns complete program/degree requirements within 42 months.
- Objective 1.2: 90 percent of program graduates take the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists within 12 months of program completion.

- Objective 1.3: The program’s one-year pass rate (graduates who pass the registration exam within one year of first attempt) on the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists is at least 80 percent.
- Objective 1.4: Of graduates who seek employment, 80 percent are employed in nutrition and dietetics or related fields within 12 months of graduation.

#2: Prepare graduates to promote health and prevent disease in communities like those in Western Massachusetts.

- Objective 2.1: At least 90 percent of graduates working in the field of dietetics will state they felt prepared to promote health and prevent disease.

Program Overview

The UMass Amherst Supervised Practice (DI) program can accommodate up to 10 students each program year. There are two tracks for the SP (DI) program: (1) the standalone supervised practice program (DI); (2) master’s degree + supervised practice program (MSDI). The requirements for the supervised practice portion (as described in this document) are the same for both tracks. The requirements for the master’s degree in nutrition (MS part of the MSDI) are discussed later in this document but be found in more detail on our [website](#). The DI program has two start dates (spring and fall). The spring cohort begins mid-May and culminates at the end of December. The fall cohort begins in late-August and ends mid-April. Program length may vary depending on prior learning credit, student’s progress, and/or desired experiences.

In accordance with the 2022 ACEND standards, students are required to complete 1000 hours of supervised practice, of which 700 hours must be conducted in a professional workplace setting and 300 hours may come from alternate supervised experiences including simulated case studies and role playing. The UMass Amherst DI provides students with approximately 1,040 supervised hours in a workplace setting and approximately 110 hours of alternate supervised practice hours.

Preceptors from healthcare facilities, school systems, and community organizations in western Massachusetts and beyond volunteer their time and attention to teaching UMass Amherst DI students about their respective areas of expertise. Collectively, they provide the supervised, professional experiences necessary to meet the competencies required by ACEND of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

The UMass Amherst DI programs are accredited through 2029 by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. ACEND is located at 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190, Chicago, Illinois, 60606-6995. To contact ACEND, call (312) 899-5400, email ACEND@eatright.org or visit their [website](#).

Master of Science (MS) in Nutrition

UMass Amherst offers two pathways for students pursuing an MSDI degree (MS in nutrition + supervised practice): 4+1 MSDI and the MSDI. The master’s degree in nutrition is 33 credits and requires the completion of six core courses, one public health course, two graduate seminars, and four electives, with one or two allowed from outside of nutrition (see **degree requirements page** for more information). The supervised practice (DI) portion of the MSDI program is the

same regardless of pathway. The following describes the two pathways for the MSDI at UMass Amherst.

4+1 MSDI is open to matriculated UMass Amherst students who will be receiving a DPD verification statement upon their undergraduate graduation. This program is a 16-months with the MS degree completed in two semesters prior to beginning supervised practice. The supervised practice (DI) begins immediately following graduation in May with completion in mid-December.

Matriculated undergraduate students may apply to this program separately through DICAS and the graduate school in the fall (October 8th deadline) of their senior year for provisional admission or in the spring. Applicants to the 4+1 MSDI will be notified of their acceptance into the program no later than November 1st (fall) or March 1st (spring). Applicants have until November 15th (fall) or March 15th (spring) to accept or decline the offer.

MSDI is open to non-UMass Amherst students that hold a DPD verification statement from an ACEND accredited university. This program is 21 months with the master's degree portion beginning in the fall and completed in three full semesters. The supervised practice (DI) portion begins in the summer after the second (spring) semester with a 10-week rotation in community nutrition and resumes after graduation in January. Completion of the MSDI program is in early June that year.

Those interested should apply to the MSDI program separately through DICAS as well as to the graduate school for an MS in nutrition with a January 15th deadline. Applicants to the MSDI will be notified of their acceptance into the program no later than March 1st. Applicants have until March 15th to accept or decline the offer.

Application details for the MS in nutrition can be found on the [SPHHS graduate admission website](#).

Professional Setting Supervised Practice

The supervised practice (DI) program described below is the same for the standalone DI and the MSDI pathways.

Students will spend approximately 185 hours (five 4-day weeks, plus time for project) in a **food service management (FSM)** rotation, gaining experience in a food service environment and completing a quality improvement project (plan-do-study-act /PDSA). Most FSM rotations are located within schools and healthcare systems, as well as opportunities with Veterans Affairs (VA), and elder affairs/Meals-on-Wheels facilities. Completion of the [ServSafe for managers](#) training (or its equivalent) must be done prior to starting the FSM rotation.

As an adjunct to the food service rotation, students will spend 64 hours (two 4-day weeks) at the VA in an intensive **management (MGT)** rotation. Students will gain managerial skills in a food service environment with specific attention dedicated to competencies required for the RD exam.

Students will spend approximately 320 hours (ten 4-day weeks) in a **community nutrition** rotation, gaining experience and building skills in a variety of settings within the community. The 10 weeks of this rotation do not need to be completed consecutively. Students typically spend half

of the time in a food/agriculture-based community rotation, and the remaining weeks in a clinically focused rotation such as an outpatient clinic.

Students will spend 360 hours (eight 4-day weeks + two 5-day weeks; plus time for case studies) in a **clinical** rotation at Berkshire Medical Center in Pittsfield, MA. Here, students rotate through the various medical units including surgical, cardiac, renal, oncology, telemetry, neuro, ICU and critical care. Students also spend time in an outpatient diabetes clinic. During their time in clinical, students complete two minor case studies (written reports) and one major case study (presentation) based on the patients they have care for.

Additionally, students will spend 48 hours (two 3-day weeks) in a VA rotation where they focus on individual and group nutrition counseling experiences. Students will also choose a **specialty** rotation (plan your own – “PYO”) where they will spend 64 hours (two 4-day weeks) working in an area of personal interest. While students are encouraged to reach out to individual preceptors (this encourages networking and fosters initiative), the director has a list of rotation options and contact information from which to choose. It is not expected that students facilitate the PYO rotation solely on their own.

All effort will be made to accommodate a student’s preferences when assigning rotation sites, as well as any issues that may arise during a rotation. If a rotation site issue is non-rectifiable, a student will be transferred to a different location or different rotation.

Alternative Setting Supervised Practice

An additional 190 supervised hours are obtained in simulated or alternative practice settings. **Clinical (60 hours)**: Prior to entering the clinical rotation, students prepare with a pre-clinical experience where they review nutrition/MNT knowledge, gain experience using an electronic health record (simulation EHR-go), and practice on simulation manikins and standardized patients, and role-play counseling scenarios. **Community nutrition (25 hours)**: students create a unique nutrition education presentation to give to a targeted group in the community (e.g., older adults, English-language learners, high school student athletes). **Research (25 hours)**: students will prepare an abstract and poster for submission and presentation, if selected, to a state (ANCE) or university conference. **Reflections and Trainings (80 hours)**: students reflect on various aspects throughout the program. Reflections build metacognitive skills that empower students and lead to better decision-making, greater resilience, and lifelong learning. Examples of reflections include self-assessment on leadership style, identifying personal strengths and areas for improvement, advocating for health/nutrition-related policies, and preparing for a career in dietetics. In addition, there are a few required trainings that support a student’s future role as an RD (e.g., ethics, EAL, *ServSafe* certification for managers).

Registration for the DI Program/Supervised Practice

All students (standalone and MSDI) will need to register for the DI practicum twice during their time in the program (NUTR 698A and 698B), which is currently held through the U+ program at UMass Amherst. Dietetic students completing the supervised practice portion only are considered “non-degree” students and should visit the [U+ website](#) for instructions on how to enroll as a non-

degree student at UMass Amherst. Students entering the spring cohort (mid-May start) will enroll for the summer (June) and fall (Sept.) semesters. Students entering in the fall (late-Aug start) will enroll for the fall (Sept.) and winter (January) semesters. Students entering in the winter (Jan.) will enroll for the spring (Jan.) and summer (June) semesters. Tuition is due at each semester's registration and will be discussed later in this document.

The UMass Amherst DI program is considered full time and students are expected to be available during business hours for the 32 weeks. Rotations are typically Tuesday through Friday (4 days/week, ~32 hrs/week) with Mondays being reserved as class days. There will not be class every Monday, but students should plan on 2-3 Mondays each month. Virtual seminars are held on several Mondays during the Fall-spring program year (Sept – May) and hosted by UMass Amherst and/or the Boston-area DI programs. Some seminars/conferences are only offered during specific times of the year and may not be available for all interns (e.g., Boston Children's 2-Day Pediatric Conference in late October; ANCE in early April). Most class days are didactic and do not count toward supervised practice, but some do (e.g., private practice & reimbursement seminar - CRDN 4.9). Students are expected to write brief reflections on these class experiences and participate in post-surveys (when applicable). These reflections will be uploaded to student's individual TEAMS folders.

The 32-hour week does not include travel time, homework/projects, or other outside preparation for the rotations. There will be a two-week break at the end of December through the New Year for the fall cohort, but the winter and spring cohorts go straight through without a scheduled break.

DI Program Completion Requirements

Competencies: As previously mentioned, each student must satisfactorily meet all the 2022 Core Competencies (beginning on page 9 in the *Curriculum and Learning Activities* section within the ACEND Accreditation Standards for Nutrition and Dietetics Internship Programs manual). Competencies are based on learning experiences designed to simulate a wide range of activities practiced by entry-level dietitians. Students work with preceptors at each rotation site (or with the program director for alternative practice settings) to ensure that all competencies are successfully met.

Performance Evaluations: A student's overall performance in a rotation will be monitored continually by the preceptor and program director, and/or by request of other involved parties. A check-in will be conducted at the mid-point to identify potential concerns, and a final performance evaluation will be conducted (in person or virtually) at the end of each rotation, and with the program director, preceptor, and intern in attendance. A "satisfactory" completion of each core competencies means that the preceptor (or program director) overseeing the competency has given the student an evaluation score of a three (3) or four (4) on a four-point scale. Students should perform self-reflections before and after each rotation. Students are expected to keep a journal and/or portfolio of their activities/deliverables during all rotations to document performance, effort, and ability. Students are also expected to fill in the "activities" they performed that correspond to the specific competencies on the evaluation form before giving it to the preceptor for scoring.

Practice Hours: The UMass Amherst DI program provides opportunity to gain approximately 1200 supervised practice hours in both professional and alternative settings. A minimum of 1,000 hours is acceptable if all core competencies and additional requirements have been satisfactorily met. Students maintain an hour log for each rotation that is signed by the preceptor upon completion. A master log summarizing the total hours spent at each rotation and for each alternative practice setting/activity should be maintained in TEAMS throughout the program.

Students are expected to complete the program within 150% of the usual time allotted. The UMass Amherst standalone DI program is 32 consecutive weeks and should be completed within 48 weeks; the accelerated (4+1) MSDI should be completed within 24 months, and the MSDI within 32 months. This is the suggested timeline but there is flexibility in completing the respective programs and students will not be terminated for requiring additional time to completion.

DI Verification Statement: Upon successful completion of the supervised practice (DI) program, graduates will receive an electronic version of their dietetic internship verification statement from the program director indicating they have satisfactorily completed their supervised practice and are eligible to take the CDR credentialing exam. Upon passing the RD exam, graduates will be registered dietitian and/or registered dietitian nutritionists (RD/RDN). More information about the RD exam can be found on the [CDR website](#).

Licensure: The 1,000+ hours of supervised practice also fulfills the “experience” portion required for state licensure in Massachusetts eligibility. Visit our [website](#) for more information on Massachusetts State Licensure requirements. Each state has its own variation on licensure requirements. Interested individuals should review their state's licensing statutes and regulations to understand the specific requirements, including supervised practice hours and examinations required to become a Licensed Dietitian/Nutritionist. More information about specific state licensure requirements and certifications can be found at this link: [State Licensure](#).

Additional Requirements of the Supervised Practice (DI) Program

Projects and Written Assignments

PDSA project: Students will complete a PDSA (plan, do, study, act) project on their own time during the internship. Most interns utilize their time spent in the Food Service Management rotation to identify a topic for this project. Addresses CRDNs 1.3, 4.3, 4.5, & 4.7. Twenty (20) hours of supervised in-person practice is applied toward your food service hours for this activity.

Sustainability project to address CRDN 4.6: Propose and use procedures as appropriate to the practice setting to promote sustainability, reduce waste and protect the environment. Ten (10) hours of supervised alternative practice (in-person if completed within a rotation) is applied toward your food service hours for this activity.

Abstract: Submit a research abstract to ANCE (or the Virginia Beal lecture) and create a poster for presentation. Abstracts are due mid-January (ANCE) or the end of March (Beal). Twenty (20) hours of alternative supervised practice is applied for this activity.

Presentations

Nutrition Education: Students will create and deliver at least one nutrition education presentation to a culturally diverse group to address CRDNs 2.2, 2.3, 2.11, 3.8. Twenty-five (25) hours of supervised in-person practice is applied for the preparation and delivery of this activity.

Major Clinical Case Study: Students will work with their clinical preceptor to identify a unique case as early as possible in their clinical rotation. They will present the major case to the clinical staff at the end of staff relief, and later, to their fellow interns. Fifteen (15) hours of supervised in-person clinical practice is applied toward the clinical hours for this activity.

Trainings

Code of Ethics training (CRDN 2.1). Students will read through the Academy's [code of ethics training](#) and take the three online quizzes to document understanding. One hour of alternative supervised practice may be applied for this activity.

EAL Tutorial: Students should complete the Academy's Evidence Analysis Library tutorial [AND EAL-tutorial](#) early in the program. They are expected to take the student orientation tutorial quiz and upload a copy/screenshot of certificate of completion to TEAMS. Two hours of alternative supervised practice may be applied for this activity.

WIC: Students who do not have experience with WIC may choose to complete a series of [WIC training modules](#) (username and password and details TEAMS). Fifteen (15) hours of alternative supervised practice may be applied for this activity. This is not a required activity.

ServSafe training: Each student must obtain a ServSafe (for managers) certification before the start of their food service/management rotation. This certificate is valid for five years and may be done before the internship begins. A copy of this certificate must be uploaded to your file in TEAMS. Eight (8) hours of alternative supervised practice may be applied for this training.

Credit for Prior Learning

The UMass Amherst DI program allows for *prior learning credit* on a case-by-case basis. This means that a student may be able to transfer up to 300* hours previously spent in a nutrition-related field toward their 1,000+ hours of supervised practice requirement. The number of practice hours applied is related to the amount of work and experience a student received prior to entering the program and is at the discretion of the program director. For example, if a student

held a full-time nutrition specialist position at WIC for over a year, up to 300 hours could count toward their community nutrition rotation, reducing the overall time spent in the program.

Prior learning credit will only be considered if the work/experience was completed during the student's senior/last year of undergraduate studies or after (i.e., until acceptance into the DI program). The student's supervisor from which the prior learning credit was received must provide written documentation attesting to the responsibilities and time spent in the position. The supervisor must also share documentation confirming the student performed specific activities which meet the required core competencies for which they are receiving credit. The program director will confirm all documentation and have the final say in how many hours may be applied. No prior learning credit will count toward the required clinical supervised practice hours. No reduction in tuition will be applied if prior learning credit is considered at 300 hours or less.

*A unique situation may arise in which an applicant might receive more than 300 hours of prior learning credit. An example of this would be if an applicant was a licensed dietitian/nutritionist (LDN) in Massachusetts (or equivalent from another state), and held an advanced position (i.e., managerial) in nutrition and dietetics for more than five years. No applicant/potential student or intern will receive more than 500 hours of prior learning credit from the UMass Amherst DI program.

Teams (secure data collection site)

The UMass Amherst DI program uses TEAMS to house all student data related to the internship. These data include, but not limited to, immunization records, background checks, drug test records, driver's license, student competency evaluations, and several other signed documents. Students will use a secure login to manage their required documentation in TEAMS.

Preceptor Training

Preceptors, faculty, instructors, and teaching assistants who will be mentoring students will be provided with an orientation to the program's mission, goals, objectives, and educational philosophy, and will be trained on the program's expectations and the current 2022 ACEND Standards with emphasis placed on their specific area of expertise. New preceptors will be asked to participate in the ACEND preceptor training program and will be granted eight CEUs upon completion. The Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) website also provides CEUs for preceptors along with additional information and self-reflection form. All mentors will receive feedback in the form of an evaluation from the students and/or program director.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Tuition and Fees

Master of Science in Nutrition

The tuition for the master's degree varies based on financial aid eligibility and residency. The following information is an estimated cost assessment and based on 33 credits. More information may be found at the UMass Bursar website.

The in-state graduate tuition at the time of this publication is approximately \$9,117 for 12 or more credits including fees. Less than 12 credits per semester is based on a cost-per-credit (~\$830/credit hour; varies). Graduate students may also be subjected to additional fees including graduate service fee, health fee, and graduate senate tax.

- Average (in-state) accelerate (4+1) MS tuition: \$18,234 (2 semesters).
- Average (in-state) MS tuition: \$21,089 (3 semesters = 15cr, 15cr, 3cr)

Out-of-state tuition is approximately \$19,482 per semester for 12 credits or more including fees. Less than 12 credits per semester is based on a cost-per-credit and varies.

- Average out-of-state MS tuition: \$48,086 (3 semester = 15cr, 15cr, 3cr)

Dietetic Internship

The tuition for the supervised practice component (DI) at UMass Amherst is \$10,000. This is payable online through your SPIRE account (the university's online student information system) in two \$5,000 installments.

Tuition deadlines depend on when the student is enrolled in the program:

- The spring cohort (May) installments are due in the summer (June) and fall (Sept.)
- The fall cohort (Aug.) installments are due in the fall (Sept.) and spring (Jan.)
- The winter cohort (Jan.) installments are due in the spring (Jan.) and summer (June)

A U+ (formerly UWW) registration fee of \$85 is due *each semester* (\$170 total) and is associated with the DI practicum courses NUTR 698A (6 credits) and 698B (6 credits). Both courses are offered each semester and do not need to be taken sequentially. Dietetic students must enroll in two consecutive DI practicums or be enrolled in graduate courses for the MSDI or risk losing access to the practicum course and being unenrolled from the program. The total tuition including fees is \$10,170. Note: additional expenses associated with the internship are to be expected and discussed below.

Employment during supervised practice

The UMass Amherst MSDI and DI programs recognize the need for students to work while enrolled in graduate courses and/or supervised practice. Graduate courses are in-person only and not currently offered as hybrid or online; however, we strive to maintain flexibility within supervised practice. That said, preceptors typically work weekday/daytime hours, therefore students must be available during those times for most of their supervised practice. Daily hours and/or days per week may be adjusted to accommodate work, although preference should be given to the internship whenever possible. Students should contact the program director if they have concerns with work/rotation hours.

Financial Aid

Students enrolled in the UMass Amherst MSDI or standalone DI programs may be eligible for financial aid through the University's Financial Aid Office. Please contact the [Financial Aid](#)

[Office](#) for more information and eligibility requirements. In addition, several scholarships and financial assistance are available through [EatRight.org](#) to qualified dietetic students.

Additional Costs and Requirements

Professional Memberships and Activities

Students are required to be active members of The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (current student membership = \$58) and the Western Area Massachusetts Dietetic Association (no fee for students) ([WAMDA](#)). WAMDA membership automatically qualifies students as members of the Massachusetts Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (MAND). Students are expected to participate in WAMDA activities throughout the program year.

Housing/Transportation/Meals/Clothing

Students are responsible for their own living arrangements and expenses. They must also have access to individual transportation since many of the rotation sites are not easily accessible by public transportation. A variety of housing options are available in the western Massachusetts area, with prices dependent on arrangement type and location. The university's [Off Campus Housing Services website](#) maintains a list of apartments and houses available for rent in the Amherst area. The average cost of renting a one-bedroom apartment in the Amherst area is \$1,840/month, while the average cost of renting a similar apartment in Westfield (approx. 25 miles from Amherst) is \$1100/month.

Travel expenses can vary based on a student's home location and distance to the rotation sites. It is realistic to assume 10-20 miles of travel per rotation workday, which would amount to 1,280 – 2,560 miles during the program, although some rotations may be further. You must have access to a reliable vehicle and/or transportation to participate in the UMass Amherst DI program.

Many rotations, particularly food service, provide free lunches to the students. Students should be prepared to purchase or provide their own meals and snacks throughout the program.

Some clinical and food service rotation sites require students to wear a lab coat and/or scrubs. These can be purchased from a variety of retail or online stores and cost approximately \$25-\$40. It is expected that students wear business casual apparel to their respective rotation sites unless otherwise specified by the preceptor. Clothing costs can range greatly. If one does not currently own business casual attire and acceptable shoes, it is reasonable to expect to spend around \$200.

Miscellaneous Costs

Students need to have access to a laptop with internet access throughout their time in the program. Students are required to obtain their *ServSafe* for managers training certificate prior to beginning their food service rotation, and ideally, prior to beginning the supervised practice (DI) program. In the past, students have used [HRFoodSafe](#) to schedule and take the course, but training for managers is offered through many vendors. As of 2025, in-person course, training manual (+shipping), and exam cost totaled \$168. Documentation attesting to the successful completion should be uploaded to their TEAMS folder.

Background Checks and Screenings

All students are required to have a CORI check by the university prior to entering the program. Several healthcare facilities require additional background checks/screenings, as well as fingerprinting. Background checks will be at the student's expense if not covered by the facility. Check with the program director on what requirements are needed for your rotation sites. The following are the background checks frequently requested at healthcare facilities:

- Nationwide Background check (7 year look back)
- Federal Criminal check (unlimited look back)
- CORI check (free)
- County Criminal check (7 year look back)
- OIG & OFAC (free)
- Massachusetts exclusions list (free)

Drug Testing

The UMass Amherst DI program does not perform drug testing on the students; however, many rotation sites do require a 10-panel drug test before a student is able to begin the rotation. *Note:* while marijuana is considered legal in the state of Massachusetts, it is still considered an illegal drug at the federal level. Therefore, facilities that accept Medicare (a federally run program) or facilities whose headquarters are in a state where marijuana is illegal, may refuse to allow a student who tests positive work at that facility. If you believe you may test positive for marijuana, notify the program director immediately, so that you may be placed in facilities that do not adhere to strict rules on this particular drug. However, there is no guarantee that a facility will waive a positive drug screen for marijuana or any illicit drug. Students should be aware of the potential impact on their ability for placement.

Student Status in Practice Facilities

It is agreed that while in practice facilities, students have the status of “trainee,” and will not routinely replace regular staff members employed at the facility. Students are not paid by the facility while performing their supervised experiences. All students are expected to abide by each facility's rules and regulations, including dress codes and personal appearance policies, and to uphold patient confidentiality and patient/client care protocols as established by that facility. A UMass Amherst DI nametag will be provided and should be worn at each rotation and group activity. Some facilities (e.g., hospitals) issue their own ID badges to students. If so, students may omit wearing the internship nametag while they are at that rotation site if deemed appropriate by the preceptor.

Travel Liability

The Nutrition Department and the University of Massachusetts Amherst assume no responsibility for dietetic students traveling between their assigned areas. All students are required to furnish their own transportation to and from rotation sites and are liable for their own travel. Students must maintain an active automobile insurance policy during the internship. A copy of their automobile insurance policy and their vehicle registration should be uploaded to their TEAMS folder at the start of orientation.

Professional Liability

Students are not required to carry their own professional liability insurance for their work associated with the internship as they are covered by a policy held by the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Vacation, Holiday, and Absence Policies

While in the graduate program, students will follow the university's holiday schedule. During the supervised practice (DI), students will follow the holiday schedule of their respective rotations. Although highly unlikely, students may be required to work on holidays (e.g., Memorial Day, Labor Day) at the discretion of the preceptor. If a student requires a holiday off, they should arrange this in advance with their preceptor and notify the program director. Students will typically have main holidays off (i.e., New Years Day, Christmas, Easter, July 4th, Thanksgiving).

Given the expedited nature of the program, vacation time is not built into the curriculum; however, vacations or time off may be arranged prior to starting a rotation and ideally, at the start of the program. Typically, the week between the Christmas holiday and New Years Day (U.S. /Gregorian calendar) is considered "time off" from the program.

Students are expected to keep to their assigned schedules, except for emergencies or illness. Students who are absent due to illness or personal reasons do not need to make up the day unless instructed by the preceptor. Sufficient hours are built into the program that can account for up to three absences. It is advisable for students to obtain the cell number of their preceptors (if acceptable to the preceptor), for immediate notifications. Students who miss long periods of time (i.e., greater than two weeks) will need to extend their time at that rotation (or find a sufficient alternative). If a student cannot extend their rotation, they should plan to spend those hours in another rotation to ensure the missed competencies are met. Rescheduling such missed work will be done at the discretion of the preceptors and the program director.

Students are responsible for notifying their preceptor of any upcoming absences or excessive lateness (more than 10 minutes of expected arrival time). Students should notify the preceptor in advance and arrange to reschedule the day's activities. Make up for missed time during a rotation (for less than 3 days) is at the discretion of the preceptor.

Health Insurance and Immunization Policies

Students are required to provide a copy of the cover page of the current health insurance policy and coverage must be insured for the entire internship year. Students moving to Massachusetts who do not have health insurance can contact the [Health Connector portal](#) at to inquire about eligibility for a plan. Students may be expected to complete a health form for some rotations.

The UMass Amherst DI program requires proof of all immunizations, including the full series of the covid vaccination and booster, as well as the flu vaccination, if required by the rotation facility. Cost of obtaining immunizations will be at the student's expense, and all documents should be uploaded to TEAMS. Most facilities, particularly hospitals and those dealing with vulnerable populations, will not allow unvaccinated students to participate; thus, the internship

requires that all students must be vaccinated against the covid-19 virus. Find the full list of vaccination requirements below:

- 2 MMR vaccines (1st dose must be on or after 12 months of age) or positive titer
- 2 Varicella immunizations (1st dose must be on or after 12 months of age) or positive titer
- 2 Hepelisav-B or 3 Hepatitis B vaccinations AND 1 titer demonstrating immunity or declination
- Proof of two step PPD (tuberculosis screen) with plant date & date read OR an IGRA-test (T-spot or QuantiFERON Gold test). If history of a positive TB, report of negative chest x-ray done within past 12 months
- TDAP (within 10 years)
- Flu vaccination or declination depending on clinical facility (typically October 1 – March 31)
- History of covid vaccination

Illness or injury during a rotation

Students are responsible for their own health and safety while in practice facilities/rotation sites. The program director will provide the student with the contact information of their preceptors before beginning the rotation. Students are responsible for contacting their preceptors and should do so at least two weeks before the rotation begins. The onboarding procedure may be extensive at some rotation sites (i.e., clinical settings); thus, it is advisable for the student to contact the preceptor at least one month in advance in those settings. Students will be responsible for completing all health screens or immunizations required by the facility and upload all documentation to TEAMS prior to the start date. Some vaccinations and testing (e.g., TB) may require a booster and/or a 2nd reading. Students should be aware of these instances and plan accordingly.

Students are required to carry health insurance and should upload a copy of their health insurance card or policy in TEAMS prior to the start of the program. Some rotation sites require a 10-panel drug test, which includes marijuana. This may be scheduled and results uploaded through TEAMS.

Complaints, Disputes, and Resolutions

Filing a Complaint against a Preceptor

If a student has a dispute with a preceptor, the student should first seek advice and assistance from the program director. All efforts will be made to resolve the situation, including finding an alternative rotation site.

Filing a Complaint against the Program Director through UMass Amherst

If the student wishes to file a complaint against the program director, the student should first seek advice and assistance with the nutrition department chair, Dr. Lindiwe Sibeko. If resolution cannot be met, the student may file a formal complaint with ACEND (see policy and procedure below). All records of disputes, complaints, and resolutions will be maintained for a period of seven years within the Department of Nutrition at UMass Amherst.

The UMass Amherst Dietetic Internship abides by the University of Massachusetts Academic Grievance Procedure and Academic Honesty Policy.

The Ombuds Office is available to all members of the University community to help resolve University-related conflicts impartially and without judging, rewarding, or punishing parties. Depending on the problem, the Ombuds Office mediates disputes, facilitates communication, investigates claims of unfair treatment or erroneous procedure, listens, advises, and makes recommendations. The Ombuds Office provides information about and referral to grievance procedures. The Office also coordinates the hearing process for academic grievances and charges of academic dishonesty.

Some of the problems with which the Ombuds Office can offer advice or assistance to students in both tracks include: course/degree requirements; grade disputes; grading policy and practice; allegations of academic dishonesty; sexual, racial, and other types of harassment; delays in services or decisions; conflicts with instructors, employers, or administrative offices; roommate/coworker/classroom conflicts; and other interpersonal disputes.

Records, contacts, and communication are normally confidential; in unusual circumstances (which are explained to clients) rare exceptions are made if required by law.

The Ombuds Office is located in 823 Campus Center, tel. 413-545-0867. Although not required, it is best to call to arrange a convenient time for an appointment.

Filing a Complaint against the Program Director through ACEND

ACEND® has established a process for reviewing complaints against accredited programs in order to fulfill its public responsibility for assuring the quality and integrity of the educational programs that it accredits. Any individual, for example, student, faculty, dietetics practitioner and/or member of the public may submit a complaint against any accredited program to ACEND®. However, the ACEND® board does not intervene on behalf of individuals or act as a court of appeal for individuals in matters of admissions, appointment, promotion or dismissal of faculty or students. It acts only upon a signed allegation that the program may not be in compliance with the Accreditation Standards or policies. The complaint must be signed by the complainant. Anonymous complaints are not considered.

For more information and procedure on how to file a complaint with ACEND or to access the Complaint Investigation Form, go to: <https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/public-notices-and-announcements/filing-a-complaint-or-violation>.

Remediation, Disciplinary and Termination Procedures

Remediation: If a student has trouble mastering a competency, they may need to spend more time in that rotation or participate in additional activities or experiences until an acceptable level of competency is achieved. A midpoint check-in is conducted during all main rotations to address any concerns and reduce the chance of a student not successfully completing the rotation.

Termination: If a student does not abide by the stated policies (program or rotation site) or student guidelines, or if they fail to meet an acceptable level of performance after remediation, disciplinary action or termination may be necessary.

UMass Amherst MSDI and DI programs use a progressive discipline model designed to provide students with opportunities for improvement before the final step of termination. Steps generally include:

1. **Verbal warning:** Issued for initial or minor infractions; documented in the student's file.
2. **Written warning:** Issued for repeated or more serious violations; includes a plan written by the student on actions for improvement. A final written warning may be issued in lieu of the first written warning depending on severity of infraction.
3. **Final written warning:** The last formal opportunity for the student to correct behavior or performance issues. A final written warning may be issued when a student has:
 - a) failed to correct deficiencies identified in prior warnings.
 - b) engaged in conduct inconsistent with professional, ethical, or academic expectations. This includes inconsistent communications with the program director, preceptors, or staff at rotation sites.
 - c) committed a significant violation that jeopardizes patient safety, academic integrity, or professional reputation.
4. **Termination:** Dismissal from the program for failure to comply with the conditions of the final warning or for a severe incident warranting immediate termination. Depending on the severity of the infraction, the program reserves the right to move directly to termination.

Contents of a Final Written Warning

The document will include:

- A clear description of the violation or concern.
- Reference to prior disciplinary actions (if applicable).
- Specific expectations for continued participation in the program.
- A measurable performance improvement plan (PIP) and timeline (typically 2–4 weeks).
- Notice that failure to meet outlined expectations will result in termination.
- Space for signatures from the student, program director (or designee).

Students are required to sign/e-sign all warnings to acknowledge receipt and understanding. A signature does not indicate agreement but confirms that the student has reviewed the document. An electronic copy will be provided to the student, and the original will be placed in the student's file in TEAMS.

Monitoring and Support

During the warning period:

- The program will provide reasonable support, mentorship, or remediation opportunities to help the student meet expectations.

- Faculty and preceptors will provide feedback and document progress.
- A follow-up meeting will occur at the end of the improvement period to determine the outcome.

Outcomes

After the review period, one of the following outcomes will occur:

1. Satisfactory Improvement: The student has met all outlined expectations. The warning remains on file, but no further action is taken.
2. Partial Improvement: The student has made progress but not fully met expectations; an extension may be granted at the program's discretion.
3. Failure to Improve: The student has not met expectations or has engaged in further misconduct. The student will be terminated from the program.

Termination Process

If termination is warranted:

- The student will receive written notice of dismissal.
- The termination letter will outline the reasons, effective date, and appeal process.
- The student must return any university or clinical property and will be withdrawn from all program activities immediately.

Right to Appeal

Students may appeal a termination decision according to the UMass Amherst grievance or appeal procedures. Appeals must be submitted in writing within 10 days of notification, following the outlined process in the institutional student policies and procedures manual.

Confidentiality

All disciplinary documentation is confidential and will be shared only with individuals directly involved in the process or as required by institutional policy, accreditation standards, or law.

Examples of conduct leading directly to termination:

- Breach of patient confidentiality or HIPAA violation.
- Academic dishonesty (plagiarism, falsification of documentation).
- Repeated unprofessional behavior after initial warning, including deficits in communication responsibilities with program director, preceptors, and/or staff.
- Insubordination or refusal to follow supervisory instructions.
- Endangering the safety or well-being of patients, peers, or staff.
- Harassment, discrimination, or other violations of the university's code of conduct.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and revised as needed to maintain alignment with institutional procedures and professional accreditation standards.

Equitable Treatment

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (Part 99 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations) allows present or former students at educational institutions access to educational records kept on them, as well as basic protections of privacy of their records. The law does not apply to applicants seeking admission to the University. The law applies to educational records, which are defined as those records that are directly related to a student and maintained by an educational agency or institution.

The Dean of Students Office, 227 Whitmore Administration Building, keeps a list of types of educational records maintained by the University, where they are kept, and who is responsible for them. The Dean of Students Office also has available a description of your rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, and procedures to be followed in exercising those rights.

If you wish to see any of the educational records which apply to you, go to the office which keeps the records during regular working hours. Make your request in writing, following the procedures established by the office. If possible, you will have immediate access to your record. In no case will you have to wait more than 45 days. If you are required to wait, the office will tell you when your record will be available. You will have to identify yourself with a picture ID to see your record.

If you wish to challenge the content of your record, first try to work the problem out with the person responsible for the record. If this proves unsuccessful, you may request in writing a hearing at which you may present your challenge. Complete information on hearing and appeal procedures is available from the Dean of Students Office, 227 Whitmore Administration building.

Visit the [University Registrar](#) for more information about UMass FERPA policies. All students will have access to their records, projects, and assignments, including evaluations in TEAMS.

UMass Amherst Health and Support Services

University Health Services serves UMass Amherst students, faculty and staff, along with their spouses, domestic partners and dependents. Information and access to healthcare services at UHS may be found on the [UHS website](#).

Mental health and counseling services, including telehealth services, are available for students/students at UMass Amherst. For more information visit the [Center for Counseling and Psychosocial Health](#).

Students may seek help or guidance for discrimination, harassment, or conduct violations through the Office of Equity and Inclusion. More information can be found on the [Office of Equity and Inclusion website](#).

Non-Discrimination Policy

The University of Massachusetts Amherst prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, sex, age, marital status, national origin, mental or physical disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation in any aspect of the access to, admission, or treatment of students in its programs and activities, or in employment and application for employment. Furthermore, University policy includes prohibitions of harassment of students and employees, (i.e., racial harassment, sexual harassment, and retaliation for filing complaints of discrimination). Go to [The Office of Equal Opportunity and Access](#) for the university's policy statement.

Inquiries concerning applicable laws, regulations, and policies should be addressed to the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Office, 305 Whitmore Administration Building, (413) 545-3464.
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IDENTITY VERIFICATION & PRIVACY PROTECTION

Identity Verification

UMass Amherst uses the NetID for credentialing in our online courses. For information on what a NetID is, go to [UMass Information Technology](#).

Privacy Protection

Student identity and privacy concerns are regulated at UMass Amherst through SPIRE by the IT department. UMass Amherst DI program adheres to the university's policy for ensuring student identity and verification and uses the DUO and/or the Microsoft two-step verification processes. For more information on the two-step verification process, go to the [Two-Step Login Tutorial](#).

The UMass Amherst Privacy Policy, including student/student privacy, can be found at the [UMass Information Privacy Policy](#).

Student Agreement

To all accepted students:

After reading the above policies and procedures manual (pgs. 1-18), please sign this document below, attesting that you agree to its contents, and upload it in TEAMS (or email to the program director (cmaxwell@umass.edu) if you do not have a TEAMS folder). If you do not agree with all the contents or have any concerns, please bring this to the program director's attention immediately.

Student Signature (or e-sign)

Date