

Dietetic Internship Program Western Kentucky University



Intern Handbook & Policies and Procedures Internship Year 2024-2025

Table of Contents

Section 1. General Information

Mission Statement - 3
Goals and Outcome Measures - 3
Program Information – 4
Program Costs - 5
Financial Assistance – 6
Student Support Services - 6
Student Health Services - 6
Student Health Insurance - 6
Student Professional Liability Insurance - 6
Drug Testing and Criminal Background Checks - 6
Access to Counseling and Testing Services - 7
Accreditation Status - 7
Internship Calendar and Schedule - 7

Section 2. Policies and Procedures

Statement of Compliance - 9
Code of Ethics for Dietetics Practitioners – 9
Equitable Treatment - 9
Student Code of Conduct – 9
Title IX Statement - 9
Assessment of Prior Learning and Credit toward Program Requirements - 10
Distance Instruction - 10
Purpose of Supervised Practice - 10
Attendance - 10
Timesheets – 10
Inclement Weather – 11
Professional Membership - 11
Professional and Personal Appearance - 11
Employment outside the internship - 11
Travel - 11
Injury or Illness Policy - 11
Access to Student Records - 12
Protection of Privacy - 12
Filing and Handling Complaints - 12
Withdrawal and Refund of Tuition and Fees - 13
Graduation and Program Completion Requirements - 13
Verification Statement Procedures - 13
Maximum Amount of Time Allowed to Complete the Dietetic Internship/Leave of Absence – 14
Intern Performance Monitoring - 14
DI Retention and Remediation Procedures - 14
Student Discipline/Termination - 14
Social Media Statement – 16

Section 3. Evaluations

Evaluations of Supervised Practice Rotations – 16
Competency Evaluations - 16
Procedure for Didactic Course Evaluations – 16
Site and Preceptor Evaluations - 17

Section 4. Forms

Code of Ethics - 18
Handbook Statement - 20
Statement of Confidentiality - 21
Emergency Contact Form – 22

Section 1. General Information

Mission Statement

The mission of the WKU dietetic internship is to develop competent entry-level Registered Dietitian Nutritionists to become leaders within their profession, engaged citizens in their communities and work to improve the quality of life of individuals, employees, and peers in their communities and beyond.

Goals and Outcome Measures

Goal 1: The program will prepare graduates to be competent, entry-level dietitian nutritionists or professionals in fields related to dietetics.

- **At least 80% of program interns complete program/degree requirements within 21 months (150% of the program length).**
- **Of graduates who seek employment, 70% are employed in nutrition and dietetics or related fields within 12 months of graduation.**
- **80% of program graduates take the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists within 12 months of program completion.**
- **The program's one year pass rate (graduates who pass the registration exam within one year of the first attempt) on the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists is at least 80%.**
- **80% of employers surveyed will rate program graduates average or above on the employer surveys.**

Goal 2: The program will encourage graduates to be professionally involved and to assume leadership responsibilities in the dietetics profession and their communities.

- 80% of program graduates will maintain RDN status.
- 50% of program graduates will attain dietetics leadership roles, management positions, project/program oversight duties, and/or be entrepreneurs within 5 years of graduating.

*Bold lettering indicates outcomes required by ACEND.

Program Information

The Dietetic Internship at Western Kentucky University (WKU) resides in the Department of Applied Human Sciences (AHS) within the College of Health and Human Sciences (CHHS).

The DI program is a part-time, 14-month program. The program starts in the July following Spring matching and ends in August of the next year. The program accepts up to ten interns each year. Students complete 14 months of supervised practice and graduate work. Supervised practice includes rotations in: Medical Nutrition Therapy, Community Nutrition, Food Systems Management, and as available Leadership. Supervised practice rotations typically run 24-32 hours/week. The program consists of 1050 hours of dietetic supervised practice experiences and 160 hours of alternate supervised experiences equaling to a total of 1210 hours. The DI concentration is in Business Leadership

This DI is a post-baccalaureate program, leading to a Graduate Certificate in Dietetic Practice and a Master's in Business Administration. Interns will be enrolled in two programs the Master's in Business Administration housed in the Gordon Ford College of Business and the Graduate Certificate in Dietetic practice program housed in the College of Health and Human Services. The 15-hour graduate certificate includes the following didactic courses:

- HMD 583 Foodservice Systems Management (3)
- HMD 584 Community Nutrition (3)
- HMD 585 Medical Nutrition Therapy in Practice (3)
- HMD 587 Seminar in Concepts and Methods of Dietetic Practice (3)
- BA 510 Advanced Organizational Behavior (3)

The HMD classes for the Dietetic Practice Certificate are delivered in hybrid format. Two weeks of intense face-to-face classroom work during the 1st summer with continuation of the classes online during supervised practice rotations.

The MBA program is a 30-credit hour program that utilizes the Certificate of Dietetic Practice as one of two required stackable certificates. Dietetic interns are requested to build their MBA program using the Enterprise Management Certificate and the Dietetic Practice Certificate along with the required BA 590 course Strategic Business Concepts and Applications and one elective. Additionally, in the last semester of the MBA program, interns are required to take BA 596 GFCB Graduate Certificate Portfolio and BA 597 MBA Portfolio which are both 0 credits hours. Please see the MBA website for more detailed information <https://www.wku.edu/mba/>

Interns are required to attend the 1–2-day orientation, which precedes the start of supervised practice and in-person classes.

The interns are in Bowling Green for 2 weeks during the 1st summer session for classwork and orientation. The interns will also be in Bowling Green during the final week of the internship. Interns are on campus 5-6 days during the fall and spring

semesters for educational opportunities and interaction with faculty and their peers. For the remainder of the internship, interns complete their required supervised practice hours at their assigned supervised practice sites. MBA classwork will be completed online. At the conclusion of the internship, interns will be on campus for 2-3 days to finalize all needed documentation, CRDNs for completion of the program are monitored throughout the program. All CRDNs must be successfully completed (level of 4 or 5) before dietetic interns can be provided a verification statement by the program director. If a CRDN is not completed at the end of the supervised practice rotation, the program director will work with the intern and as needed a preceptor to provide an opportunity for the intern to demonstrate competency of the CRDN.

The internship will additionally provide the interns with free preparation materials for the RDN Examination. This internship utilizes Jean Inman review materials. The materials include a comprehensive study manual over each domain, an auditory recorded lecture for each domain, and over 1000 sample test questions from all domains. The materials will be available to the interns for the duration of the internship program. Periodically, the interns will have the opportunity to take practice quizzes and practice exams over the material to gauge their knowledge on the material. Interns will be notified before the administration of any practice quiz or practice exam. The internship will also utilize exam preparation materials provided by ACEND to help interns with exam readiness.

Estimated Program Costs

It is the responsibility of the intern to pay the program fees.

- WKU Graduate Studies application fee (only after being matched to WKU's DI program).....\$65
- Tuition.....\$20,346 (all students for the MBA and Certificate)
- WKU Application for graduation, certificate....\$15
- Living expenses.....\$5000-7000
- TB skin test series.....\$20
- Student liability insurance.....\$35+
- Background check.....\$50
- Academy student membership.....\$50
- Parking on campus (one day permit - \$2.00).....\$20
- Medical/Lab coat.....\$50
- Hepatitis B vaccine (at local health department).....\$225 (3 shots @\$75)
- Books.....\$200-300
- Drug Screen.....\$55
- Registration, Lodging, Transportation for State Dietetic Meeting... \$250-400
- Health Insurance.....\$1,500.00 varies
- Immunization Fees.....\$68

- Transportation Costs.....\$1500 varies

Financial Assistance

Financial aid is available through the University.
<https://www.wku.edu/financialaid/types/loans.php>

A limited number of professional scholarships are available through the Academy for Nutrition and Dietetics. Application qualifications and forms are available at the following link:

<http://www.eatrightpro.org/resources/membership/student-member-center/scholarships-and-financial-aid>

WKU Office of Student Support Services

Dietetic interns as graduate students at WKU have access to multiple support services. See website <https://www.wku.edu/sss/> for specific services and how to access services.

Student Health Services

Dietetic interns, as WKU students, have access to Student Health Services as described in the WKU Student Handbook under [WKU Health Services](#).

Student Health Insurance

Dietetic interns must have personal health insurance prior to beginning the internship. This insurance is required by some of our clinical agencies and is needed to defray the cost of hospital and medical care for any illness or injury that might be sustained while in this program and the substantial monetary liability that you, as a student, might incur because of failure to have such insurance.

Student Professional Liability Insurance

Interns are required to purchase professional liability insurance. Proof of insurance is required before you can begin your supervised practice experiences. One source is www.proliability.com ; with a minimum insurance of \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$3,000,000 aggregate.

Drug Testing and Criminal Background Checks

A background check and drug testing are required of all interns. Drug screening is available at CastleBranch www.castlebranch.com. CastleBranch provides both drug and background services. Other providers may be used. Graves-Gilbert clinic will do drug testing. All interns must comply with the drug testing and background testing requirements of their supervised practice sites. It is recommended that interns contact their supervised practice sites a minimum of 4-week prior to starting their rotations to complete all required elements needed to begin their rotations on time.

Access to Counseling and Testing Services

Dietetic interns, as WKU students, can access a variety of support services as specified in the WKU Student Handbook. The WKU Counseling and Testing Center, in Potter Hall 409, provides personal counseling services and administers national testing programs.

Contact the Center for appointments and for test information at (270) 745-3159 or see the [website](#).

Accreditation Status

The Western Kentucky University Dietetic Internship has been accredited by the Accreditation Council for Nutrition and Dietetics Education of the Academy for Nutrition and Dietetics, 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190, Chicago, IL 60606-6995; Acend@eatright.org: 800-877-1600. For information regarding:

Accredited programs for dietitian/nutrition students:

- Coordinated Programs, Didactic Programs and Dietetic Internships
- Accredited programs for dietetic technician students
- Computer matching for dietetic internships
- Sponsoring organizations eligibility requirements, Standards of Education, and policies for accreditation refer to www.eatright.org/ACEND .

Internship Calendar and Schedule

This program will consist of 1210 hours of supervised practice experience and experiential learning hours with a concentration in Business Leadership. The internship is a 14-month program. In the event of a health, medical, or family emergency a Leave of Absence may be granted to an intern. Please see the Leave of Absence policy information on page 13 of the handbook. The supervised practice rotations will be divided into concentration areas. Concentration areas include Medical Nutrition Therapy, Community Nutrition, Foodservice Systems Management. The class and rotation schedule /calendar is planned for each student and will be provided to the student during orientation.

WKU dietetic interns do not select their own internship sites, though if an intern requests a certain type of rotation (i.e. sports nutrition, extension services, etc.) the DI director will try to find a rotation that will provide the requested experience.

The Dietetic Internship does not follow the academic calendar for the university. Interns will be required to follow the schedule set by the interns' preceptors; this may include supervised practices hours on weekends and/or holidays.

The Internship Calendar (subject to change)

Program Schedule Example

1st Summer

July 8th – July 19th – HMD Graduate classes begin via Blackboard

July 21st – July 22nd -- Orientation onsite at WKU

July 22nd – August 2nd -- HMD Graduate Classes on campus

August 5th -- Supervised practice begins – 24 – 32 hours/week

August 19th – Fall semester begins; MBA classwork begins, supervised practice experience at 24 - 32 hours/week continues.

December 23rd – December 27th – Winter Break

December 30th – Supervised practice experience resumes

January 21st -- Spring Semester Graduate course work resumes

February – March – Dates TBA – Legislative Day

March 5th – March 6th – Kentucky Dietetic Association Meeting; Poster presentation of research project

May 8th – Spring semester ends

May 12th -- Summer semester begins; Graduate classes resume. Supervised practice experience continues.

July 25th – Supervised Practice experience completed.

July 28th – July 30th – Interns on campus. Final evaluations

August 8th – Summer semester ends.

August 31st -- Degrees conferred.

September 2nd – Request for final transcripts sent to graduates.

September 5th – September 15th – Verification Statements sent to graduates.

Section 2. Policies and Procedures

Statement of Compliance

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to equal opportunity in its educational programs and employment. The University is an Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, marital status, age, uniform service, veteran status, pregnancy, childbirth or related conditions, or physical or mental disability. On request, WKU will provide reasonable accommodations, including auxiliary aids and services, necessary to afford an individual with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in all services, programs, activities, and employment.

Code of Ethics for Dietetics Practitioners

WKU Dietetic Interns are expected to use the Code of Ethics for the Profession of Dietetics as a guide for their professional behavior. The code is included in this manual on page 18.

Equitable Treatment

The Dietetic Internship Program at Western Kentucky University is committed to empowering its community to embrace diversity by building equitable and inclusive learning, working, and living environments. The program does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, marital status, age, uniform service, veteran status, pregnancy, childbirth or related conditions, physical or mental disability, size or socioeconomic status.

Student Code of Conduct

The University is committed to developing and maintaining the highest standards of scholarship and conduct. Therefore, all students are subject to the rules and regulations of the university. In accepting admission to the Dietetic Internship, students indicate their willingness to abide by university rules and regulations and acknowledge the right of the university to take appropriate disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion as may be deemed appropriate, for failure to abide by university rules and regulations. For rules related to student conduct, see the following [link](#).

Title IX/Discrimination & Harassment

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to supporting faculty, staff and students by upholding WKU's [Title IX Sexual Misconduct/Assault Policy](#) (#0.2070) and [Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#) (#0.2040). Under these policies, discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct based on sex/gender are prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator, Andrea Anderson, 270-745-5398 or Title IX Investigators, Michael Crowe, 270-745-5429 or Joshua Hayes, 270-745-5121. Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct to a faculty member, WKU faculty are "Responsible Employees" of the University and MUST report what you share to WKU's Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you may contact WKU's [Counseling and Testing Center](#) at 270-745-3159.

Assessment of Prior Learning and Credit toward Program Requirements

The WKU Dietetic Internship does not allow exemption from any dietetic internship rotation, project or assignment because of prior education courses or experiences.

Distance Instruction

Distance instruction will take place through the WKU Blackboard online learning platform. Each student has a unique username and password to verify their identity. Interns will complete instruction on campus through face-to-face classroom content and discussion. Project work will be turned in during campus days or through the Blackboard learning system. All interns are expected to abide by the Student Code of Conduct.

Purpose of Supervised Practice/Intern Replacement of Employees

The purpose of supervised practice is to provide interns with hands-on, educational training. Interns are not to replace facility staff. Interns may not replace staff to fulfill any staff work responsibilities, unless related to activities to meet dietetic internship competencies/requirements. Replacement of employees is defined as interns being placed on the regular work schedules in lieu of paid employees. If you, as an intern determine you are being used as a replacement for employees, contact the internship director for intervention.

Attendance

Dietetic interns are expected to be punctual and available throughout the entire rotation and to attend all scheduled classes and supervised practice experiences related to the program. The program does not include an allocation of sick or personal leave days. All absences and reasons for absences should be reported to the Internship Director and Preceptor by phone a minimum of sixty (60) minutes prior to scheduled regular work hours. In addition, an email must be sent within the first hour to the Internship Director and Preceptor reporting the absence and reason. Unexcused absences are not acceptable and are subject to disciplinary action. If an intern is absent for the third time during a rotation, the Internship Director will review the absences and remedial action may be deemed necessary. Arriving late and /or leaving early from the supervised practice site may be considered an absence. Any missed time during the supervised practice experience must be made up by completing time during the same rotation; therefore, ensuring completion of the required minimum supervised practice hours. The intern is responsible for arranging make-up time/days with the Preceptor. The Internship Director must be informed of a make-up time and /or day via email.

Time Sheets

All interns will complete time sheets during each of the scheduled rotations. Interns are responsible for following any directions for the recording of times. At the end of each rotation, time sheets should be shown to the preceptor or site director for verification. Once time has been verified, the preceptor or site director will place their initials in the appropriate box. If time is missed, the intern will fill out the appropriate information on the time sheet with the date, number of hours missed, reason and how the time is going to be made up. These time sheets are due during each on-campus day throughout the internship and at times designated by the internship director.

Inclement Weather Policy

During inclement weather conditions, you should adhere to the rotation site policy and decisions made by the main preceptor on whether you should come in or not. Any time missed due to inclement weather must be made up at a time agreed upon with the main preceptor.

Professional Membership

All interns must become student members of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Professional and Personal Appearance

Students are expected to always present themselves in a professional manner regarding behavior and appearance. Dress code is established by each facility. The following general principles apply to all WKU interns:

- Good personal hygiene and professional appearance.
- Dress is business casual. Denim, shorts, revealing attire, leggings, athletic wear etc. are not permitted. Shoes should be flat or low heeled (most clinical and foodservice facilities restrict the wearing of open-toed shoes, e.g. sandals).
- The student's nametag must be visible; some facilities also require additional identification.
- Lab coats or scrubs can be worn as required in the supervised practice site.
- During food service rotations, interns are expected to adhere to the supervised practice site policies that may include additional requirements such as hair coverings, jewelry removal, specific types of shoes, etc.

Employment outside the Internship

Part-time employment during the internship is allowed, but it is expected that any employment will NOT interfere with the internship's requirements. Missing any scheduled time of supervised practice and internship expectations due to an outside job will result in disciplinary action.

Travel

Interns are responsible for providing their own transportation for all educational activities, including rotation placements. The University or Dietetic Internship does not provide any travel reimbursement for students traveling to their field placement assignments or other required activities. Interns are also responsible for securing their own personal auto liability insurance. WKU is not liable for any accident or injury that occurs during travel required for college-related activities.

Injury or Illness Policy

Students are liable for all medical or health care (emergency or otherwise) while at WKU or any supervised practice site. Each facility has a policy for injury or illness on the job. The dietetic intern is required to alert the preceptor if injury or illness occurs, and the preceptor will then guide the intern through the proper protocol. The dietetic intern must also notify the Director of the Dietetic Internship Program of the incident.

Access to Student Records

In accordance with federal law as established in 1974 by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Western Kentucky University maintains the confidentiality of student records and provides a student the right to inspect and review education records, the right to seek to amend those records, and the right to limit disclosure of information from the records.

Dietetic Intern files related specifically to the internship will be kept in a locked file cabinet in an office. An intern must provide in writing either through email or letter requesting to see his/her file. Once an agreed upon date and time is set the file will be provided to the intern to review at that time. The file must be reviewed in an area determined by the DI director and must be returned immediately to the dietetic internship director upon completion of the review.

Protection of Privacy

An Intern's Dietetic Internship file is housed in a locked file cabinet in an office. All information in the intern's file is kept private except for projects the intern completed. Preceptors may refer to an intern's project as requested. No one has direct access to the files except the Dietetic Internship Director.

Filing and Handling Complaints

These procedures are consistent with the [Student Grievance Procedure](#) for WKU. A student who disagrees with a faculty member or preceptor about an academic matter must first try to resolve it through discussion with the instructor/preceptor. If the issue is not resolved satisfactorily between the student and the instructor /preceptor, the student may specify in writing the basis for the disagreement and request a review by the Internship Director. If the issue is an appeal of the final grade received in a course, this request must be submitted within three months of the date that term grades are issued by the Registrar.

A student who wishes to appeal the decision of the Program Director must write/email the Department Head of Applied Human Sciences Department within a month of the date of the Program Director's decision, enclosing copies of the written documents and requesting a review. The Department Head, in consultation with the Program Director, will arrive at a final decision in the matter. If the complaint is still not resolved, the intern should meet/write the Dean of the College of Health and Human Services. If no resolution occurs at this point, the intern may file a written notice of appeal which is delineated in the WKU Student Handbook.

The Accreditation Council for Nutrition and Dietetics Education (ACEND) will review complaints that relate to a program's compliance with accreditation standards. Written complaints to ACEND should only be initiated once all other options of reporting and review of the complaint have been exhausted at the program, department, and university levels. ACEND is interested in the sustained quality and continued improvement of dietetics education programs but does not intervene on behalf of individuals in matters of admission, appointment, promotion or dismissal of faculty, staff, or students. A copy of the accreditation standards and/or ACEND's policy and procedure for submission of complaints may be obtained by contacting staff at the

Academy for Nutrition and Dietetics, 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190, Chicago, IL 60606-6995.

Withdrawal and Refund of Tuition and Fees

For various reasons a student may withdraw from the University. Information concerning withdrawal and refund of tuition and fees may be found in the [graduate catalog](#).

Graduation and Program Completion Requirements

Verification Statements are only granted under the following circumstances (receipt of the Verification Statement allows a graduate to apply to take the written exam to become a Registered Dietitian Nutritionists):

1. Completion of 1210 supervised practice hours/alternate supervised practice experiences as evidenced by signed time sheets and completed academic work.
2. Meets performance standards and receives a minimum satisfactory score (4/5) on all CRDNs.
3. Completes and receives a satisfactory score (75%) or above on all course assignments
4. Maintain professional and ethical standards as outlined in the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Code of Ethics
5. Completion of all required coursework with an average GPA of 3.0 or greater.
6. Conferral of Certificate of Dietetic Practice and Master of Business Administration (unless MBA requirement exempted); if MBA is exempted, proof of master's degree conferral is required.
7. The dietetic intern has discharged all indebtedness to Western Kentucky University.

All dietetic interns must complete an Application for Graduation and for the Certificate of Dietetic Practice in the WKU Office of the Registrar.

Verification Statement Procedures

Upon successful completion of graduation requirements, the Internship Director will electronically notify the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) that the intern has met the graduation requirements. The Internship Director will issue the intern a "Verification Statement" documenting completion. CDR will notify the intern within 15 days (about 2 weeks) of their eligibility to take the national registration exam for dietitians.

Maximum Amount of Time Allowed to Complete the Dietetic Internship/Leave of Absence

Most interns can expect to complete the Dietetic Internship in the 14-months planned to complete the program. If interns have a health related or family emergency and must leave the program for a period of time the intern will be put on a Leave of Absence. The Leave of Absence will stop the clock regarding the 14-month time frame allowed for the program's completion. Once the intern returns from the Leave of Absence the clock for the maximum amount of time to complete their internship will restart. Arrangements for the extended experience will be completed by the Program Director, in cooperation with preceptors and the intern. Intern grades for the classes of the Dietetic Internship will remain incomplete until the work is completed, at which time a grade for the experience will be assigned. A Leave of Absence will be given for a maximum of 12 months.

Intern Performance Monitoring

The internship director will seek feedback from preceptors and interns throughout supervised practice hours. The internship director requests all preceptors or preceptor contacts to contact the internship director if there are performance concerns/issues. The internship director and the facility contact will discuss possible solutions. If the intern performance concerns do not improve and there are concerns of the intern successful completion of the program, then DI retention and Remediation procedures will be initiated.

DI Retention and Remediation Procedures

If an intern does not meet the competencies of the supervised practice experience, the student will be assigned to continue with additional experiences, not to exceed two months, until the desired level of expertise is accomplished. Should this occur, the Program Director, in consultation with the preceptor of the facility, will provide in writing specific steps and actions that are to be required of the student. If the student does not meet competencies at this point, the student will be dismissed from the program or offered an opportunity to restart the program with the next internship cohort, if it is deemed the intern has the potential to meet competencies with more training. If it is deemed either by the intern or the program director that future placement into the internship is not an option, the intern will be counselled about possible alternate career paths and opportunities.

If at any time the conduct of an intern is judged to unfavorably affect the morale of other participants in the program, result in an unsatisfactory level of performance, or the health status of a student is a detriment to the student's successful completion of the program, a meeting shall be held between the Program Director and appropriate representatives to determine corrective action.

Student Discipline/Termination

Behavior and/or attitudes deemed inappropriate by the DI Director, and/or Preceptor will be brought to the attention of the intern. Behaviors and/or attitudes reported by the preceptor to the DI Director will result in beginning the process for correcting the inappropriate behavior/attitudes.

Disciplinary action will be progressive and accomplished in a private and constructive manner to facilitate improvement in dietetic intern behavior and performance.

Step 1. Written counseling. The DI director will inform the dietetic intern in writing of the conduct or performance problem. Specific expectations for improved conduct or performance will be outlined for intern. A written summary will be given to the intern and the original placed in the intern's file in the DI director's office. In some cases, due to distance, meetings may occur via electronic means or phone. A copy of the warning will be sent electronically at the time of the meeting.

Step 2. Second warning, written counseling. The DI director will inform the intern of the conduct or performance problem in writing. Specific expectations for improved conduct or performance will be outlined for intern. A written summary will be given to the intern and the original placed in the intern's file in the DI director's office. In some cases, due to distance, meetings may occur via electronic means or phone. A copy of the warning will be sent electronically at the time of the meeting.

Step 3. Third warning, probation. The intern may be placed on probation when there is evidence that he/she has difficulty in complying with Standards of Professional Performance and Code of Ethics for the Profession of Dietetics or is unable to complete rotation requirements. All facts will be carefully reviewed and confirmed through personal interviews with preceptors, the intern and any other involved parties prior to placing the intern on probation. The DI director will discuss probationary status with the intern in private. In addition, a letter outlining reason(s) for probation, performance requirements, expectations, and a time-period for re-evaluation will be provided. The intern will receive guidance, support, and/or counseling from DI director or other appropriate support personnel to facilitate successful completion of the program. The intern will receive a copy of the letter and the original will be placed in the intern's file in the DI director's office.

If the intern fails to meet performance requirements or expectations, or the intern receives additional unsatisfactory ratings during the probationary period, the intern will be dismissed from the program.

An intern terminated from the WKU internship program for inappropriate behavior, attitudes and/or performance will not be considered for future internship placements. Examples of inappropriate behavior include:

- chronic tardiness
- missed work
- insubordination to faculty or supervised practice site staff
- theft,
- cheating or plagiarism
- violation of Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Code of Ethics
- violation of Western Kentucky University student conduct code

Other behaviors may be deemed worthy of a formal warning upon consultation with Preceptors, the Site Director, WKU Faculty and DI Director.

There will be **no reinstatement** after termination.

Social Media

Social media should be understood to include any website or forum that allows for the open communication on the internet including, but not limited to:

- Social Networking Sites (LinkedIn; Instagram; Facebook)
- Micro-blogging Sites (Twitter)
- Blogs (including personal)
- Video and photo-sharing Websites (YouTube; TikTok; Flickr)

In general, interns should think carefully before posting online, because most online social platforms are open for all to see. Despite privacy policies, interns cannot always be sure who will view, share, or archive the information that is posted. If interns have any doubt about what to post online, ***it is best not to post.***

Interns should not use social media during working hours or on equipment provided by your supervised practice site unless such use is work-related or authorized by a preceptor.

Interns should protect WKU and the supervised practice training site's private, confidential, and proprietary information. Interns should make sure that online postings do not violate any non-disclosure or confidentiality obligations or disclose any confidential and/or proprietary information of WKU or the supervised practice-training site.

Section 3. Evaluations

Evaluations of Supervised Practice Rotations

Supervised practice rotations will include formal student learning assessment and performance evaluation using the Intern Evaluation Form specific to the rotation. Preceptors will complete the Intern Evaluation Form at the midpoint of the rotation and at the end. Midpoint evaluations are only applicable for sites in which the intern is present at least 6 weeks. The Student Evaluation Form completed by the preceptor should be signed by the dietetic intern and preceptor. The signed Student Evaluation Form and the dietetic intern's self-appraisal should be submitted to the Program Director within 1-week of completion of the rotation.

Competency Evaluation

Dietetic Interns will be evaluated on their level of competency specific to the required CRDNs to be met through the Dietetic Internship. Interns will be required to submit all competency documentation before the end of the dietetic internship

Procedure for Didactic Course Evaluations

Didactic course grades are determined by the course instructor, based on the course description provided at the beginning of the course. Students must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0 for successful program completion. The course instructor will retain custody of materials used to determine the student's grade, i.e., exams, papers, portfolio items, for at least 90 days after notice of

the student's final course grade OR make reasonable effort to return such materials to the student's custody. If the course instructor is notified of a student's intent to file a grade appeal while the materials remain in the course instructor's custody, extraordinary care for the materials must be taken until such time as the appeal is resolved.

Site and Preceptor Evaluations

At the end of each rotation, the intern will evaluate his/her experiences in the rotation. The evaluation is designed to indicate the strengths and weaknesses of the rotation, the Preceptors, Site Director, any other staff and the supervised practice site. These comments should be constructive and professional and reflect the time and commitment preceptors provide throughout the training. The evaluation forms will be sent to the Director and placed into a rotation evaluation file. These evaluations will be used as a basis of discussion during the annual review of the program, which includes WKU faculty and advisory committee members.

Preamble:

When providing services the nutrition and dietetics practitioner adheres to the core values of customer focus, integrity, innovation, social responsibility, and diversity. Science-based decisions, derived from the best available research and evidence, are the underpinnings of ethical conduct and practice.

This Code applies to nutrition and dietetics practitioners who act in a wide variety of capacities, provides general principles and specific ethical standards for situations frequently encountered in daily practice. The primary goal is the protection of the individuals, groups, organizations, communities, or populations with whom the practitioner works and interacts.

The nutrition and dietetics practitioner supports and promotes high standards of professional practice, accepting the obligation to protect clients, the public and the profession; upholds the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (Academy) and its credentialing agency the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) Code of Ethics for the Nutrition and Dietetics Profession; and shall report perceived violations of the Code through established processes.

The Academy/CDR Code of Ethics for the Nutrition and Dietetics Profession establishes the principles and ethical standards that underlie the nutrition and dietetics practitioner's roles and conduct. All individuals to whom the Code applies are referred to as "nutrition and dietetics practitioners". By accepting membership in the Academy and/or accepting and maintaining CDR credentials, all nutrition and dietetics practitioners agree to abide by the Code.

Principles and Standards:**1. Competence and professional development in practice (Non-maleficence)**

Nutrition and dietetics practitioners shall:

- a. Practice using an evidence-based approach within areas of competence, continuously develop and enhance expertise, and recognize limitations.
- b. Demonstrate in depth scientific knowledge of food, human nutrition and behavior.
- c. Assess the validity and applicability of scientific evidence without personal bias.
- d. Interpret, apply, participate in and/or generate research to enhance practice, innovation, and discovery.
- e. Make evidence-based practice decisions, taking into account the unique values and circumstances of the patient/client and community, in combination with the practitioner's expertise and judgment.
- f. Recognize and exercise professional judgment within the limits of individual qualifications and collaborate with others, seek counsel, and make referrals as appropriate.
- g. Act in a caring and respectful manner, mindful of individual differences, cultural, and ethnic diversity.
- h. Practice within the limits of their scope and collaborate with the inter-professional team.

2. Integrity in personal and organizational behaviors and practices (Autonomy)

Nutrition and dietetics practitioners shall:

- a. Disclose any conflicts of interest, including any financial interests in products or services that are recommended. Refrain from accepting gifts or services which potentially influence or which may give the appearance of influencing professional judgment.
- b. Comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including obtaining/maintaining a state license or certification if engaged in practice governed by nutrition and dietetics statutes.
- c. Maintain and appropriately use credentials.
- d. Respect intellectual property rights, including citation and recognition of the ideas and work of others, regardless of the medium (e.g. written, oral, electronic).
- e. Provide accurate and truthful information in all communications.
- f. Report inappropriate behavior or treatment of a patient/client by another nutrition and dietetics practitioner or other professionals.
- g. Document, code and bill to most accurately reflect the character and extent of delivered services.
- h. Respect patient/client's autonomy. Safeguard patient/client confidentiality according to current regulations and laws.
- i. Implement appropriate measures to protect personal health information using appropriate techniques (e.g., encryption).

3. Professionalism (Beneficence)

Nutrition and dietetics practitioners shall:

- a. Participate in and contribute to decisions that affect the well-being of patients/clients.

- b. Respect the values, rights, knowledge, and skills of colleagues and other professionals.
- c. Demonstrate respect, constructive dialogue, civility and professionalism in all communications, including social media.
- d. Refrain from communicating false, fraudulent, deceptive, misleading, disparaging or unfair statements or claims.
- e. Uphold professional boundaries and refrain from romantic relationships with any patients/clients, surrogates, supervisees, or students.
- f. Refrain from verbal/physical/emotional/sexual harassment.
- g. Provide objective evaluations of performance for employees, coworkers, and students and candidates for employment, professional association memberships, awards, or scholarships, making all reasonable efforts to avoid bias in the professional evaluation of others.
- h. Communicate at an appropriate level to promote health literacy.
- i. Contribute to the advancement and competence of others, including colleagues, students, and the public.

4. Social responsibility for local, regional, national, global nutrition and well-being (Justice)

Nutrition and dietetics practitioners shall:

- a. Collaborate with others to reduce health disparities and protect human rights.
- b. Promote fairness and objectivity with fair and equitable treatment.
- c. Contribute time and expertise to activities that promote respect, integrity, and competence of the profession.
- d. Promote the unique role of nutrition and dietetics practitioners.
- e. Engage in service that benefits the community and to enhance the public's trust in the profession.
- f. Seek leadership opportunities in professional, community, and service organizations to enhance health and nutritional status while protecting the public.

Glossary of Terms:

Autonomy: ensures a patient, client, or professional has the capacity and self-determination to engage in individual decision-making specific to personal health or practice.¹

Beneficence: encompasses taking positive steps to benefit others, which includes balancing benefit and risk.¹

Competence: a principle of professional practice, identifying the ability of the provider to administer safe and reliable services on a consistent basis.²

Conflict(s) of Interest(s): defined as a personal or financial interest or a duty to another party which may prevent a person from acting in the best interests of the intended beneficiary, including simultaneous membership on boards with potentially conflicting interests related to the profession, members or the public.²

Customer: any client, patient, resident, participant, student, consumer, individual/person, group, population, or organization to which the nutrition and dietetics practitioner provides service.³

Diversity: "The Academy values and respects the diverse viewpoints and individual differences of all people. The Academy's mission and vision are most effectively realized through the promotion of a diverse membership that reflects cultural, ethnic, gender, racial, religious, sexual orientation, socioeconomic, geographical, political, educational, experiential and philosophical characteristics of the public it serves. The Academy actively identifies and offers opportunities to individuals with varied skills, talents, abilities, ideas, disabilities, backgrounds and practice expertise."⁴

Evidence-based Practice: Evidence-based practice is an approach to health care wherein health practitioners use the best evidence possible, i.e., the most appropriate information available, to make decisions for individuals, groups and populations.

Evidence-based practice values, enhances and builds on clinical expertise, knowledge of disease mechanisms, and pathophysiology. It involves complex and conscientious decision-making based not only on the available evidence but also on client characteristics, situations, and preferences. It recognizes that health care is individualized and ever changing and involves uncertainties and probabilities. Evidence-based practice incorporates successful strategies that improve client outcomes and are derived from various sources of evidence including research, national guidelines, policies, consensus statements, systematic analysis of clinical experience, quality improvement data, specialized knowledge and skills of experts.²

Justice (social justice): supports fair, equitable, and appropriate treatment for individuals¹ and fair allocation of resources.

Non-Maleficence: is the intent to not inflict harm.¹

References:

1. Fornari A. Approaches to ethical decision-making. *J Acad Nutr Diet*. 2015;115(1):119-121.
2. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Definition of Terms List. June, 2017 (Approved by Definition of Terms Workgroup Quality Management Committee May 16, 2017). Accessed October 11, 2017. <http://www.eatrightpro.org/~media/eatrightpro%20files/practice/scope%20standards%20of%20practice/academydefinitionoftermslist.ashx>
3. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: Revised 2017 Standards of Practice in Nutrition Care and Standards of Professional Performance for Registered Dietitian Nutritionists. *J Acad Nutr Diet*. 2018; 118: 132-140.
4. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics "Diversity Philosophy Statement" (adopted by the House of Delegates and Board of Directors in 1995).

Western Kentucky University

Dietetic Internship Handbook Statement

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have read and familiarized myself with the 2024-2025 edition of the Western Kentucky University Internship Program Handbook.

I understand the contents of this document and how the policies and procedures of Western Kentucky University's Dietetic Internship Program will impact my progress in the program.

I have spoken with the Director of the Dietetic Internship to discuss any questions or concerns I have regarding the contents of this Internship Program Handbook.

Name (Please print)

Signature _____ *Date* _____

Code of Ethics Acknowledgement Form

I, _____, am a Dietetic Intern in the Western Kentucky University Dietetic Internship Program. I have read the Code of Ethics for the Profession of Dietetics. I understand its guidelines, and I agree to uphold its ethical principles. As a student member of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and as a future ACEND-credentialed dietetics practitioner, I agree to abide by the Code.

Name (Please print)

Signature _____ *Date* _____

Statement of Confidentiality

Upon enrollment in didactic classes at Western Kentucky University, that have any clinical component, including visitation of clinical settings and working with clinical personnel, each dietetic intern is required to sign the following statement. This statement shall remain in the dietetic intern's file in the Program Director's office for the duration of his/her participation in the Dietetic Internship Program. Any breach of confidentiality on the part of the dietetic intern may result in immediate dismissal from the Dietetic Internship Program.

I understand that during my participation as a dietetic intern at Western Kentucky University, I may be privileged to confidential medical information regarding patients being observed and treated. I understand that this information is confidential and protected by state and federal (HIPAA) law. Further, I agree not to discuss or disclose such information with anyone except the registered dietitians, other medical personnel with authority to discuss the case, or the instructor of the course. Furthermore, I will abide by this confidentiality policy at all times and will not disclose such information to any other persons at any time without the direct written consent of the involved patient or unless I am required to disclose such information by law.

Name (Please print)

Signature of Dietetic Intern _____ *Date* _____

Western Kentucky University Dietetic Internship
Emergency Contact Form

Name:

Local Address:

Cell Phone:

Home Phone:

WKU email address:

Other Email address:

Emergency Contact:

Name:

Relationship

Phone

Emergency Contact:

Name

Relationship

Phone

Additional Information: Please attach a copy of your health insurance card.

Any allergies? Yes/No

If yes, please list all allergies:

Are you taking any medications we should be aware of?

Yes/ No

Please list all medications we should be aware of:

Do you have any medical/mobility/mental health concerns of which we should be aware?

Yes/No

If yes, please list medical/mobility/mental health concerns that we should be aware of:

The information requested on this form is confidential and for emergency use only. In the event of a medical emergency, this information will be used by authorized emergency personnel. Please be honest when completing all pertinent information.

In the case of emergency, I give permission for my information to be released to emergency personnel. I also agree that any of my emergency contacts listed on this form may be notified in an emergency, as needed.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____