## DIDACTIC PROGRAM IN DIETETICS

***STUDENT HANDBOOK***

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

***ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY  
Revised January, 2021***

**ACU Promise**

ACU is a vibrant, innovative, Christ-centered community that engages students in authentic spiritual and intellectual growth, equipping them to make a real difference in the world.

**ACU Mission**

“To educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world.”

**Didactic Program in Dietetics**

The Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) Policies and Procedures comply with and are patterned after Abilene Christian University Policies and Procedures. The DPD is a program accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (***https://www.eatrightpro.org/ACEND***) of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND): https://www.eatrightpro.org. The DPD at Abilene Christian University offers a B.S. degree in Nutrition.

**DPD Mission**

To prepare graduates to enter supervised practice leading to eligibility for the CDR credentialing exam to become Registered Dietitians Nutritionists who serve and lead through exemplary practice in fields of nutrition or dietetics while modeling Christian values.

**DPD Goals**

DPD goals are revised periodically and reflect long-term goals for students and the program as a whole. Current goals:

**Program Goal 1:** The program will prepare graduates to enter dietetic internships and graduate school.

* + - * At least 80% of program students complete program/degree requirements within 3 years (150% of the program length).
* At least 80% of program graduates apply for admission to a supervised practice program prior to or within 12 months of graduation.
* At least 80% of program graduates are admitted to a supervised practice program within 12 months of graduation.
* The program’s one-year pass rate (graduates who pass the registration exam within one year of first attempt) on the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists is at least 80%.
* At least 80% of the responding Supervised Practice Program Directors will rate ACU DPD graduates as adequately prepared or greater for supervised practice.
* At least 80% of responding graduates who complete a dietetic internship will indicate they felt prepared for supervised practice.
* At least 80% of graduates who applied for graduate school were admitted.

**Program Goal 2:** The program will prepare graduates to have commitment to community and Christian service.

* At least 80% of responding graduates will report they are serving the church or community.

**Outcomes: Student Learning Assessment Outcomes for 2020-2022 Cycle**

**Domain 1: Scientific and Evidence Base of Practice: Integration of scientific information and research into practice**

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| KRDN 1.1: Demonstrate how to locate, interpret, evaluate and use professional literature to make ethical, evidence-based practice decisions. | 100% of students will score 80% or above on the Research and Evidence-Analysis Library assignment. |
| KRDN 1.2: Use current information technologies to locate and apply evidence-based guidelines and protocols. | 100% of students will score 80% or above on the Clinical Case Study Assignment. |
| KRDN 1.3: Apply critical thinking skills. | 100% of students will score 80% or above on the Worksite Wellness Nutrition Intervention Research Paper. |

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

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| KRDN 2.1: Demonstrate effective and professional oral and written communication and documentation. | 100% of students will score 80% or above on the Vitamin and Mineral project assignment and presentation. |
| KRDN 2.2: Describe the governance of nutrition and dietetics practice, such as the Scope of Nutrition and Dietetics Practice and the Code of Ethics for the Profession of Nutrition and Dietetics; and describe interprofessional relationships in various practice settings. | 100% will of students will score 80% or above on the Code of Ethics assignment. |
| KRDN 2.3: Assess the impact of a public policy position on nutrition and dietetics practice. | 100% of students will score 80% or above on the test questions related to the impact of a public policy position.  Public Policy Impact Statement Assignment |
| KRDN 2.4: Discuss the impact of health care policy and different health care delivery systems on food and nutrition services. | 100% of students will score 80% or above on test questions relating to health care delivery of services.  Health Delivery Systems and Reimbursement for Nutritional Services Assignment |
| KRDN 2.5: Identify and describe the work of interprofessional teams and the roles of others with whom the registered dietitian nutritionist collaborates in the delivery of food and nutrition services. | 100% of students will score 90% or above on the Vitamin and Mineral project assignment and presentations. |
| KRDN 2.6: Demonstrate an understanding of cultural competence/sensitivity. | 100% of students will score 80% or above on the cultural sensitivity assignment. |
| KRDN 2.7: Demonstrate identification with the nutrition and dietetics profession through activities such as participation in professional organizations and defending a position on issues impacting the nutrition and dietetics profession. | 100% of students will score 80% or above on the Community Assessment Project.  The Profession of Community Nutrition Assignment, and Defending a Position Assignment. |
| KRDN 2.8: Demonstrate an understanding of the importance and expectations of a professional in mentoring and precepting others. | 100% of students will score at least 80% on the Professional Responsibilities assignment. |

**Domain 3: Clinical and Customer Services: Development and delivery of information, products and services to individuals, groups and populations**

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| KRDN 3.1: Use the Nutrition Care Process to make decisions, identify nutrition-related problems and determine and evaluate nutrition interventions. | 100% of students will score 80% or above on all ADIME note assignments. |
| KRDN 3.2: Develop an educational session or program/educational strategy for a target population. | 100% of students will make a 80% or above on the written nutrition education plan assignment. |
| KRDN 3.3: Demonstrate counseling and education methods to facilitate behavior change for and enhance wellness for diverse individuals and groups. | 100% of students will score 80% or above on the recorded Individual Counseling Session assignment. |
| KRDN 3.4: Explain the processes involved in delivering quality food and nutrition services. | 100% of students will score 80% or above on the Food Service Laboratory Notebook assignment. |
| KRDN 3.5: Describe basic concepts of nutritional genomics. | 100% of students will answer 8 out of 10 of the genomic specific questions correctly. |

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

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| KRDN 4.1: Apply management theories to the development of programs or services. | 100% will score at least 3 out of 4 on the assignment relating to management theories as part of their group meal project. |
| KRDN 4.2: Evaluate a budget and interpret financial data. | 100% of students will score 80% or above on the portion of the exam relating to food service budgets. |
| KRDN 4.3: Describe the regulation system related to billing and coding, what services are reimbursable by third party payers, and how reimbursement may be obtained. | 100% of students will score 80% or above on the billing and coding webinar with embedded quiz questions. |
| KRDN 4.4: Apply the principles of human resource management to different situations. | 100% of students will score 3 or above on a 4 point scale for team presentations. |
| KRDN 4.5: Describe safety principles related to food, personnel and consumers. | 100% of students will score 80% or above on the ServSafe exam. |
| KRDN 4.6: Analyze data for assessment and evaluate data to be used in decision-making for continuous quality improvement. | 100% of students will score 3 out of 4 or above on the CQI project and presentation. |

**DPD Program Assessment**

Attainment of goals and learning outcomes will be assessed on an ongoing basis according to the Programmatic Assessment Plan (PAP) and Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan. Program assessment results will be reported in the DPD Annual Assessment Report every summer to the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment and incorporated into the annual institutional assessment. Results from the PAP every semester and feedback from program graduates on a yearly basis will be used to develop management plans and revise the curriculum. The Visiting Committee (advising committee) members for the DPD will review the PAP yearly, and the PAP will be revised every summer according to the advice of the Visiting Committee, program graduates, and results on the DPD Annual Assessment Report.

Some states have Licensure for Dietitians. Students who desire to obtain licensure should check about the requirements in their state. Below are the requirements for applying for Licensure for Dietitians in Texas:

* Bachelor's or graduate degree with major in human nutrition, food and nutrition, nutrition education, dietetics, or food systems management, or equivalent internship and preplanned professional experience approved by the Board
* Successful completion of an examination administered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

**Bachelor of Science in Nutrition**

The B.S. in Nutrition degree plan is displayed in the university catalog and sets forth the completion requirement for the DPD concentration. A copy of the DPD B.S. in Nutrition degree plan is given to prospective and new students from the DPD director’s office to inform them of graduation and program completion requirements. The degree plan is also included in the ACU catalog.

Graduates who complete the DPD program may apply for dietetic internships, after which they are eligible to take the registration examination to become registered dietitians. All students completing program requirements receive verification statements signed by the DPD director.

**DPD Faculty**

The DPD Director will have at least a Master’s degree in Nutrition or related degree and will be a Registered Dietitian. The director will have sufficient authority and responsibility to manage the DPD. Some duties include:

1. Consult with administrators concerning DPD activities

2. Coordinate the DPD course schedule

3. Participate in or approve DPD communications/correspondence including

completing Verification Statements, Declaration of Intents, and recommendations

and reference letters, and responding to inquiries into the program, etc.

4. Develop and propose new courses as needed

5. Secure course materials including textbooks, software, lab equipment, and any other

course materials

6. Design DPD materials for the public and for students

7. Review published materials detailing the DPD or DPD courses and make necessary

alterations

8. Assess Student Learning Outcomes, make action plans, and alter courses and the

curriculum accordingly

9. Act as the Student Dietetic Association sponsor

10. Participate in the process of securing other DPD faculty

11. Participate in Passport Sessions and in other meetings with prospective and new

students

12. Act as the academic advisor to DPD students

13. Administer graduating senior survey every semester and graduate survey via email

on a yearly basis, tabulate results, and consider changes to be made in the

curriculum

Other DPD faculty will have at least a Master’s degree in Nutrition or related degree and will preferably be a Registered Dietitian.

**DPD Recruitment**

Recruitment of students is performed via the Nutrition sections on the web site for the Department of Kinesiology and Nutrition, via a brochure printed specifically for the DPD, and through university recruitment efforts. Recruitment procedures are performed without discrimination and offer equal opportunity in accordance with university policy.

**New and Prospective Student Packet**

Printed materials given to students who are interested in the DPD concentration include at least the following in the DPD Student Handbook:

1. DPD Policies and Procedures with Mission, Goals, and Learning Outcomes

2. DPD B.S. in Nutrition Degree Plan

3. Four-year Degree Plan of Recommended Courses by Year

4. Nutrition Brochure detailing the program

5. Pathway to Becoming a Registered Dietitian

6. Check It Out - Becoming a Registered Dietitian – A Food and Nutrition Expert

7. What Can I Do With This Degree?

8. Estimated Tuition and Fees

9. Statement of Dietetic Internship Availability

10. DPD Application

A DPD Handout Receipt is signed by each student receiving the DPD Student Handbook for verification purposes and is kept as a part of student records.

**Admission Requirements into the University**

Requirements for admission into the university are explained in the ACU catalog. Briefly, admission requirements are:

1. Completed application and processing fee

2. Official transcripts of all previous academic work

3. SAT or ACT scores

4. Two references evaluating the candidate’s character and potential to succeed at ACU

and contribute to the campus environment

5. Housing reservation if 1st or 2nd year student

6. Completed health record

7. Health insurance is required to be maintained while the student is enrolled in the DPD.

Admission procedures are applied equitably by university policy in compliance with law.

**Admission Requirements and Student Application for Acceptance into the DPD**

Admission into the DPD requires a formal application and interview process as described below:

Overall GPA of 3.0 with at least a GPA of 3.0 in DPD courses and 60 hours successfully completed. Transfer students or students who change their major to Nutrition must have taken at least 6 hours of nutrition courses at ACU, have been a Nutrition major at ACU for at least 2 semesters, and meet the GPA requirements (mandatory) = 50 points

Membership in the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND)--mandatory= 10 points

Membership in the ACU Student Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics = 10 points

Attendance and being active in dietetic associations (seminars, meetings, service projects) = 10 points

Work or volunteer activities in the field of dietetics = 10 points

Commitment to working in the field of dietetics after graduation (mandatory) = 10 points  
  
Recommendation from DPD Director and one other nutrition professor—10 points

The student must have at least 90 points to gain admittance into the DPD track of the Nutrition degree. A committee composed of EXSC department faculty, including DPD faculty, will interview each candidate to determine how many points have been accrued. Candidates may interview anytime after they have successfully completed 60 hours with the requirements listed above.

A GPA of 3.2 must be retained to continue to be enrolled in the DPD. The “C” rule applies such that no grade of “D” or “F” may be made throughout the DPD curriculum without having to retake the course in which the inadequate grade was made.

The application for admission into the DPD is provided in the DPD Student Handbook, which is given to students who express an interest in applying for the DPD. The application process complies with university policies and procedures and is an equitable process without discrimination except concerning the above criteria for admission. If an applicant has a complaint concerning the admission process into the DPD, the procedure for complaints must be followed, as explained later in this document.

**Nondiscrimination Policy**

The DPD program will comply with all applicable federal and state non-discrimination laws and will not engage in prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, color, nationality or ethnic origin, gender, age, or disability, including qualified disabled veterans and qualified veterans of the Vietnam Era. The aim of the program faculty is to treat all students equally in every situation and to try to prevent discrimination outside of the university when students are involved in activities outside of the university. Like the statement in the ACU Student Guide, the DPD faculty deplores racism and will not tolerate behaviors with expressions of hatred or intimidation because of the belief that all people are created in the image of God.

**Counseling and Testing**

Individual counseling and career testing is available to students through the Office of Career and Academic Development.

**Credit by Examination**

Credit by examination is available for certain courses and placement tests are available for Mathematics and English through the University Testing Center.

**Assessment and Credit for Prior Learning**

Transfer applicants must submit an official transcript from each college previously attended and a high school official transcript. They must be in good standing with the college or university previously attended. All course work from other institutions completed prior to enrollment at ACU will be evaluated. How transfer credit is applied toward an ACU undergraduate degree depends on an evaluation of each course to determine its comparability in content and semester-hour credit to a corresponding ACU course or degree requirement. Experiential learning is not currently allowed for DPD courses.

**Financial Aid Resources**

Student Financial Services information is available through the Student Financial Services Office. Financial Aid resources include work-study, loans, grants, and scholarships. The Marie Wilmeth Scholarship is available to DPD students who have at least sophomore status and have been in the program at least 1 academic year.

**Costs to the Student**

Tuition and fees change periodically, but this information is readily available through the Student Financial Aid office on campus. Current fliers of this information are given to prospective students by the DPD director. For the 2015-2016 academic year include:  
  
Application Fee $ 50.00

Academic Tuition for up to 36 hours block tuition  
per academic year $37,750.00

Housing and meals $11,000.00  
  
Books $ 1,000.00

Travel or Field Experiences $ 30.00

Physical exam and immunization expenses $ 50.00-200.00

Fingerprint and Background check fees $ 50.00  
  
Drug Testing $ 30.00

Professional Organizations: $ 100.00

**DPD Counseling and Academic Advising**

The DPD Director communicates with the academic advisor for DPD students and will provide students with information concerning registration in appropriate and required courses to satisfy B.S. Degree in Nutrition and DPD concentration requirements. An advising agreement will be signed by each student during academic advising sessions. An advising code will be given to each student when advising agreements are obtained. Copies of advising agreements are kept in each student’s file.

**Academic Program Calendar**

An academic calendar and schedule bulletin including the same information for the DPD is available to students online and in the main office of the Kinesiology and Nutrition Department, the Office of the Dean of the College of Education and Human Services, and many other offices on campus. DPD courses are listed under the Nutrition Section. Each course is required to include a calendar listing dates with activities, including vacations and holidays.

A 4-year layout of recommended courses for each semester of the DPD is provided to each student interested in applying to the DPD.

**Withdrawal from Courses and Refunds**

The DPD complies with ACU policies and procedures concerning withdrawal from courses, and refund of tuition and fees should be reviewed in classes by all professors the first week of each semester. Academic calendars with dates for applicable refunds are posted on university web sites accessible to students. The student should first visit with the DPD advisor and instructor of the course when considering withdrawing from a course. The advisor will direct the student to complete the Withdrawal From Class form when the student desires to withdraw from a course.

**Assessment of Student Learning and Reports of Performance**

Student learning is assessed formally during and at the conclusion of each course. Midterm grades and final grades are sent to each student. Grades for each examination, project, report, etc. are revealed confidentially to students as soon as they are available. Student Learning Outcomes are assessed according to the Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan, and program goals are assessed according to the Program Assessment Plan throughout and at the conclusion of each semester.

**Retention and Remediation Policy**

There may be times when student performance does not meet criteria for progressing in the program, such as student GPA falling below the required 3.2 overall and/or in DPD courses or not passing KRDNs. The student will be placed on DPD probation for one semester in an attempt to avoid dismissal from the DPD. If at the end of the next semester, the GPA does not meet the DPD GPA requirement, the student will be dismissed from the DPD. The student may take courses again until the GPA requirement is met, and the student may reapply to the DPD at that time. However, the student may not graduate with the DPD concentration of the B.S. in Nutrition without being enrolled in the DPD and meeting the requirements for it. Students will be encouraged and counseled concerning their career options when they do not meet requirements for the DPD.

**Graduation and/or Completion of DPD Requirements**

DPD requirements are detailed in the B.S. in Nutrition document, which is given to interested prospective students and other interested students. This document is included in the DPD Handbook. The preferred time period for students to complete DPD requirements is three years after being admitted to the DPD. There may be nontraditional students or students with other time issues that may not be able to complete requirements within the time period of three years. Students with these issues are welcomed to continue working on DPD requirements and are considered to be enrolled in the DPD as long as they are enrolled in the university each semester.

**Student Records and Verification Statements**

Completion of the requirements for the Abilene Christian University Didactic Program in Dietetics will be verified by the DPD Program Director prior to issuing Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) verification statements. All requirements must be met as stated on the degree plan for the NDPD track. Verification statements will be issued to students by the Director of the DPD upon graduation or completion of the DPD requirements. These verification statements can be provided to Dietetic Internship Directors when applying to dietetic internships. All student academic records are kept indefinitely by the university. Records are also kept in the office of the Director of the DPD. Verification statements are kept indefinitely as a part of student records for each student completing all DPD requirements.

**Computer Matching Information for Dietetic Internships**

Computer matching information from D & D Digital Systems is given to students who apply for dietetic internships and is explained to all students while they are enrolled in NUTR 401 Nutrition Seminar. The website for D & D Digital Systems is:

## https://www.dnddigital.com/ada/

**Educational Rights and Protection of Privacy**

The DPD complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, intending to protect the privacy of educational records and establishes the right of students to inspect and review their education records. ACU provides guidelines for the correction of inaccurate or misleading data. Students have access to their personal DPD student file when meeting with the DPD director for advising or at other times if requested. Files and personal information of other students are confidential and closely guarded.

**Health Services**

Health services are available on campus through the Medical Clinic. A year-round hospitalization insurance program is available to students through the Billing/Receivables Offices.

**Liability for Safety in Travel**

Liability for safety in travel to or from assigned areas is the responsibility of the student.

**Injury or Illness While in Field Experiences or Practicum**

Injury or illness during a field experience or practicum is the responsibility of the student.

**Grievances/Complaints**

The DPD follows the university procedure for dispute resolution. Resolution is always to begin at the initial level of the dispute. Usually, the student should attempt to resolve a dispute with the professor in question. If resolution does not occur, the Chair of the Department of Exercise Science and Health is normally able to resolve all disputes within the department. The student may appeal the department chair’s decision to the Dean of the College of Education and Human Services and finally to the provost, whose decision is final.

If the grievance is a program matter, resolution should begin with the Director of the DPD. If resolution does not occur, the same procedure as other complaints should be followed, beginning with the Chair of the Department of Kinesiology and Nutrition, then the Dean of Education and Human Services, and finally to the provost.

A student may submit a complaint regarding accreditation standards to the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND). ACEND can be contacted by email ([ACEND@eatright.org](mailto:ACEND@eatright.org)), phone (1-800-877-1600, ext. 5400), or mail (120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190, Chicago, IL 60606-6995.

**Disciplinary Action and Dismissal**

The DPD follows the university procedure for disciplinary actions and maintains the same philosophy of discipline as listed in the Student Guide. Briefly, ACU and the DPD maintain a Christian discipline. The philosophy of discipline is neither legalistic nor permissive but calls members of the ACU community to a high standard of conduct in order to establish and maintain an environment conducive to learning and personal growth. The intent of all discipline is to enhance growth, maturity, responsibility for one’s own behavior, and accountability for one’s own actions.

Disciplinary actions include informal warning or written formal warning and service restitution for Section One violations, probation or suspension from the university for Section Two violations, and dismissal from the university for Section Three violations. Section violations are outlined in the Student Guide. The Dean of Campus Life automatically reviews all recommendations of suspension or dismissal before the decision is enforced. An appeals process for disciplinary action also exists and is stated in the Student Guide.

**DPD Policies and Procedures**

The DPD Policies and Procedures will be given to students interested in the DPD concentration upon advising for registration their first semester the interest is known. Each student will sign the DPD Handbook Receipt form stating the policies and procedures were received, and the signed form will be kept in the student’s folder. All student folders will be checked to assure the form has been signed and is included in the folders every semester during advising sessions for registration.