Dietetic Internships

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND)

Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND)
Objectives

- Internship basics
- How to find information on Dietetic Internship programs
- Deciding which dietetic Internship to apply to
- Understanding DICAS
  - Dietetics Internship Centralized Application System
Dietetic Internship Basics

- All internships must provide a total of 1200 hours of supervised practice in a combination of:
  - Food Service
  - Clinical
  - Community
  - Emphasis Area/Concentration
    - i.e., Clinical, Advanced Community, Future Trends in Dietetics
- Must complete the internship to take the RDN exam
- Starting 2024 the Commission on Dietetic Registration of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics will require the addition of a Master’s degree (~36 credits) to take the RDN exam, if a Dietetic Internship has not been completed by January 1, 2024
Types of Dietetic Internships

- **Hospital Based**
  - Ex., New York- Presbyterian, Northwell
  - **Benefits**
    - They provide the learning sites
    - Strong clinical in acute care
    - One-on-one access to program director in person
    - May not offer college credits towards Master’s degree

- **Food Service Management Company**
  - Ex., Aramark, Sodexo
  - **Benefits**
    - They provide the learning sites
    - If positions available will hire you after you complete the internship, may pay for your graduate school if you work for them
    - Seminar with DI Director may be distance learning

- **College Based**
  - Ex., Queens College, Hunter College, and Long Island University-Post, Stony Brook University
  - **Benefits**
    - Will earn some graduate school college credits
    - One-on-one access to program director in person
Types of Dietetic Internships

- **Distance Learning Programs**
  - 1. They provide the supervised practice sites. Ex., Oneonta
  - 2. You must find the supervised practice sites and the preceptor who will supervise your learning experiences. May need to find the preceptors prior applying to the internship. Ex., Wellness Workdays, Priority Nutrition Care
  - Same competencies must be met as all other DI programs

- **Individualized Supervised Practice Pathways (ISPPs)**
  - Can only apply if you were not accepted into a DI previously and have earned a Verification Statement
    - Some will allow you to apply immediately after you found out you did not match
**Types of Dietetic Internships**

- **Army**
  - Tuition free master's degree plus internship program
  - Salary plus benefits equivalent to ~$54,000/year
  - Program completed in 20 months and must remain on active duty for an additional 4 years
  - Application is due December 1st for the following year’s August start date; does not participate in DICAS but does use DnD computer matching
  - Minimum 3.0 GPA in Nutrition and Dietetics coursework required to apply, GRE, age requirement, must be U.S. citizen
  - [http://www.baylor.edu/graduate/nutrition/](http://www.baylor.edu/graduate/nutrition/)
Costs of Dietetic Internships

- Will cost you ~$8000 and up
To Find Dietetic Internship Programs

- [http://www.eatrightpro.org](http://www.eatrightpro.org) -> ACEND and Accreditation
  -> Accredited Education Programs -> Dietetics Internships
- Also, Dietetic Internship software on Remsen 308 computers
  - Or purchase $35 eatrightpro.org -> Store -> Applicant Guide to Supervised Practice
- Detailed information of about 215 of the 250 internships
  - Contact Information
  - Costs
  - Minimum GPA required to apply, Average GPA of current interns
  - Area of emphasis
  - Week in each rotation
  - Number of student who applied in the previous 2 years
  - Number of students they accept
  - How they prioritize ranking; science GPA, Dietetics GPA, letters of reference, personal statement, volunteer/work experience...
How to Find Out More About Dietetic Internships

- **Attend a Dietetic Internship Fair**
  - A group of internship directors from an area will gather in one site for potential applicants to visit their table
    - New York DIs at Hunter, Lehman, NYU or Queens College (changes each year)
    - Massachusetts DIs
    - Food and Nutrition Conference and Expo
      www.eatrightfnce.org/

- **Attend Open Houses**
  - Individual internships will set a date when they will be available to tour their facility and ask questions
  - Ask for an individual meeting with the DI director
Create a Good Impression

- Every time you communicate with a DI director or their staff you are making an impression, you are being interviewed
  - Be polite
  - Write professionally
  - Dress professionally
  - Bring your resume/business card
  - Thank them
    - Verbally
    - In writing (get their business card)
Deciding which Dietetic Internships to Apply To

- **Know your priorities**
  - Area of interest
  - Affordability
  - Location
  - Do you want to obtain graduate credits
  - Apply to any internship you would be satisfied attending

- **Read all information on the DI’s website**
  - Ask the DI director questions that are not available on their website

- **Attend the Internship Fair and Open House**

- Ask if you can speak with a current or prior dietetic intern
Dietetics Internship Centralized Application System (DICAS)
Basics

- To start your Dietetic Internship Centralized Application System (DICAS) [https://portal.dicas.org](https://portal.dicas.org)
  - Applicant Portal
  - Help section
    - Video overview
  - Instructions for each area of the application
  - Can contact DICAS to ask questions: (617) 612-2855
Information Required

- **Applicant Information**
  - **Contact Information**: Name, address, phone number, email address
  - **Personal Information**: Citizenship status, Visa status, Veteran?, Language spoken ...
  - **Background Information**: Disciplinary actions, civil suits against you, probation or suspension

- **Match Information**
  - [http://www.dnddigital.com](http://www.dnddigital.com) Register with computer matching organization

- **Educational Information**
  - **DPD Course list** *(download from QC Nutrition & Dietetics webpage)*
  - **Colleges Attended**
  - **Course Work**
  - **Tests**: GRE and/or TOEFL if required by the DI program

- **DPD Program**
  - **Contact Information**
Information Required

- Personal Statement
- Additional Information
  - Awards, Experiences, Volunteer Activities
  - Resume
  - Reference
  - Application Certification (Signature/ Date)
- Program Designation
- Honors and/or extracurricular activities after beginning college
  - Honors and Awards
  - Sports and Extracurricular Activities
  - Certifications
  - Work and Volunteer Experience (next slide for more detail)
Transcripts

- All OFFICIAL transcripts are to be sent to DICAS
  - DICAS Transcript Department
    PO Box 9118
    Watertown, Massachusetts 02472

- Request from all college(s) early in the process
  - Provide Transcript Request Form to each college when requesting transcript be sent

- If you have an international (foreign) transcript you can check with the DI directors of the programs you are applying to if they require a copy of a foreign transcript or an official evaluation

- If your current name is different from the name listed on your transcript, you MUST include both your current and former name on the Transcript Request Form.

- Request Fall grades be included in transcript

- DICAS will
  - Verify for authenticity
  - Scan them in so Dietetic Internship directors can review them, takes 10 business days from when DICAS receives the transcript

- Hard copy must be sent to internship director after acceptance
Entering Coursework

- Under **Education Information** must list colleges attended
- Under **Coursework**
  - Student lists **Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) courses only** in the order of the semester attended from each college where DPD courses were completed
- Use the DPD Course List posted on the QC Nutrition and Dietetics webpage and your OFFICIAL transcripts as a guide for entering the courses
  - Indicate courses as Science or Professional
    - **Science Courses** - Chemistry and Biology
    - **Professional Courses** - FNES and Psychology
- For DPD courses not taken at Queens College you must use the advisement sheet developed when you first declared your major. See me if you need a copy.
- DICAS will calculate GPA
Repeated Courses from the Same Institution

- ___No, this course was either not a repeated course, or was the final attempt of a repeated course
  - (Only or final time course was taken)
- ___Yes, this course was repeated at this institution, and this was not the final attempt
  - (Need to repeat the course - i.e., due to earning less than a C)
- Examples, transcript shows
  - D for Bio 43  Spring 2015 ---- check Yes
  - B for Bio 43  Fall 2015------- check No
Declaration of Intent and Verification Statement

- Applicant will request either:
  - **Declaration of Intent**
    - For students who have not yet completed all DPD courses or have not earned their bachelor’s degree yet
  - **Verification statement**
    - For students who have completed all DPD courses and Bachelor’s degree

- Nutrition and Dietetics Director completes online
- Sent back to the student. Student then approves with electronic signature
- If needs editing, students send it back to Director who corrects and then sends it back to student for electronic signature
- Verification Statement are sent to students 8-12 weeks after they graduate. The student must provide the hard copy of their Verification Statement to their Dietetic Internship Director by the start of their internship
Volunteer Hours; Information Required

- Employer:
- Position:
- Supervisor’s Name (1st and Last)
  - Supervisor’s Title, Phone #, Email
- Start and End Date (Month and Year)
  - Number of Weeks
  - Hours per Week
  - Total Hours at Experience
Personal Statement

Questions to be addressed:

- Why do you want to enter the dietetics profession?
- Discuss experiences that have helped prepare you for your career. For example:
  - Club Officer (Leadership/Communication Skills)
  - Volunteer Experience (Initiative/Motivation, Interpersonal Skills)
  - Employment History (Works Independently, Responsibility, Mature, Handles Stress)
- What are your short-term and long-term goals?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses or areas needing improvement?
- What other information do you consider important for the selection decision?

8000 characters, ~1000 Word limit

Recommend you compose the statement in Word and cut & paste
You can write and title a different personal statement for each program you are apply to
References

- A minimum of 3
  - Faculty, Employers or Volunteer Supervisor
  - You must formally ask the person, preferably in person
    - If you do not have prior approval from the reference letter writer they can press deny on DICAS and you no longer have a recommender
  - Ask them what they need to write the letter; i.e., list of your accomplishments while volunteering/ working at their facility/ in their class
  - DI Director may request an additional reference
  - DICAS can upload up to 4
- Email sent to reference person
- Student notified when complete
- Your letters of recommendation **DO NOT** need to be complete in order for you to submit your application.
• An assessment of your academic/professional strengths and weaknesses will be evaluated from a checklist.

• Written information about your strengths, weaknesses, area of improvement will be provided.

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Supplemental Portion of Application

- Student’s responsible to determine if a particular DI requires additional material and what they require
- You must scan all supplemental material into one electronic file, i.e., pdf
Internships that start in **August** each year

- December 8 – DICAS and DnD sites open
- **February 15** – **Deadline**
- Last week in March you can change the order of preference of your applications with DnD Digital
- ~ April 6 (date is different each year) - notified if matched or not to a Dietetic Internship
- ~ 1-2 days after match period - Second Round Match for programs with openings
- Dietetic Internships start ~end of August
Internship that start in **January**

- ~July 1 – DICAS and D & D sites opens
- **September 2^{nd} or 3^{rd} week** - site closes to applicants
- ~ November (date is different each year) - notified if matched or not to a Dietetic Internship
- ~ 1-2 days after match period - Second Round Match for programs with openings
- Dietetic Internships start in January
DICAS Records

- Applicants **matched** to a dietetic internship program files will be deleted (temporarily archived).

- Applicants **not matched** to a dietetic internship will be saved.
  - Except for letters of recommendation
  - Declaration of Intents

- Applicants can update information for future applications to dietetic internships when DICAS reopens.
Fees

- DICAS Application Fee
  - $45 for first application, $20 for each additional application

- Internship Program Fee
  - Each program must be sent a check directly to them. See their website for fee and who to write the check to.

- DnD Computer Matching Fee
  - $55
  - www.dnndigital.com
Application Checklist

- Completed Application on DICAS including
  - Personal Statement
  - Letters of Reference
    - Minimum of 3
  - Transcripts mailed to DICAS regular mail or electronically
  - Resume
  - Declaration of Intent/Verification Statement
  - File with DnD Digital
  - Pay fees
When all is said and done
Have a plan

- **Apply to Second Round Match**
  - After DI Match date if a DI has not filled all their slots they will accept applications within 3-5 days after the match date

- **Apply to Individualized Supervised Practice Pathways (ISPP)**

- **Apply Graduate School**

- **Obtain a Certification**
  - Dietetic Technician Registered (DTR) Exam
    - Contact N&D Director
  - ServSafe
  - Dietetic Technician Registered (DTR)
  - Certified Dietary manager (CDM)
  - Certified Lactation Specialist
If Not Accepted into DI: Employment Opportunities

- **Clinical**
  - Nursing Homes, Hospitals, Assisted Living Facilities
  - Food Service Supervisor/Manager in
    - Hospitals, Nursing Homes, School Food and Nutrition Programs
    - Foodservice Contract Companies (i.e., Aramark, Sodexo, Morrison)

- **Research**
  - Research Assistant or Coordinator (Universities and U.S. Department of Agriculture)

- **Community**
  - Women Infant Children - WIC, Fitness Centers, Home Health Services

- **Writing on nutrition for publications, web and blogs.**
Dietetic Technician, Registered (DTR) Credential Exam

- Obtain, fill out NDTRE and DTRE Misuse form
  - Drop off original signed (blue ink) form with Dr. Miner
- [https://www.cdrnet.org/certifications/registration-eligibility-requirements-for-dietetic-technicians](https://www.cdrnet.org/certifications/registration-eligibility-requirements-for-dietetic-technicians)

**Study Guides**

- Registration Examination for Dietetic Technicians, 7th Ed.
  - Practice Examination voucher for the Practice Registration Examination for Dietetic Technicians
- Study Buddy DTR review manual
  - CD-rom with 2 practice exams, 100 questions each.
    - [www.dtrstudybuddy.com](http://www.dtrstudybuddy.com)
NY State Certification in Dietetics Nutrition (CDN) http://www.op.nysed.gov/prof/diet/

- Need 800 hours of supervised practice hours signed off by an employer or volunteer supervisor, who is a RD or CDN, stating you are able to:
  - Assess nutrition needs and food
  - Plan for and direct the provision of food appropriate for physical and dietary needs
  - Provide nutrition counseling, such as advice on dietary changes
  - Plan menus and direct the preparation of food to meet dietary needs