Dietetic Internships

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND)

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

- 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
    - Ex., Clinical, Advanced Community, Future Trends in Dietetics
- Must complete the internship to take the RDN exam
- To take the RDN exam the Commission on Dietetic Registration of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics will require the addition of a Master’s degree (~36 credits) to if a Dietetic Internship has not been completed prior to January 1, 2024.
Types of Dietetic Internships

- **College Based**
  - Ex., Queens College, Hunter College, and Long Island University-Post, Stony Brook University
  - Benefits
    - They provide the learning sites
    - Will earn some graduate school college credits
    - One-on-one access to program director in person
    - Will usually earn credits toward a Master’s degree

- **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
Types of Dietetic Internships

- **Food Service Management Company**
  - Ex., Aramark, Sodexo
  - **Benefits**
    - They provide the learning sites
    - If positions are available they 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
Types of Dietetic Internships

- **Distance Learning Programs**
  - You must find the supervised practice sites and the preceptor who will supervise your learning experiences. May need to find the preceptors prior to applying to the internship. Ex., Wellness Workdays, Priority Nutrition Care.....
  
  - To find preceptors:
    - When volunteering develop relationships with the RDs who may be your contact for finding preceptors.
    - [https://prerd.org/](https://prerd.org/) site may help you
    - Call hospital, nursing homes, clinics. Ask if they have an RD on staff.
      - Explain to the RD that you are in the midst of applying to distance dietetic internship programs which require students to locate their own preceptors, ask if they accept dietetic interns.
      - Offer to send your updated resume and references.
    - Use LinkedIn
    - Search “Find a Preceptor” on eatrightpro.org (must be a member of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics)
    - All Access Internship Facebook group
    - Ask other DI applicants, current dietetic interns, friends, neighbors, relative...
Types of Dietetic Internships

- Individualized Supervised Practice Pathways (ISPPs)
  - Can only apply to these if you applied and were not accepted into a DI previously
  - Some will allow you to apply immediately after you found out you were not accepted to a DI in the Spring or Fall match
Costs of Dietetic Internships

- Will cost you ~$8000 and up
Types of Dietetic Internships

- Army
  - Tuition free master's degree plus internship program
  - Salary plus benefits equivalent to ~$54,000/year
  - Program completed in 21 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 and age requirement, must be U.S. citizen
  - http://www.baylor.edu/graduate/nutrition/
  - Recruiter: healthcare.goarmy.com 1800 USA-ARMY
To Find Information about Dietetic Internship Programs

- [http://www.eatrightpro.org/ACEND](http://www.eatrightpro.org/ACEND)
- Also, **Applicant Guide to Supervised Practice** software on Remsen 308 computers
  - Or purchase $35 eatrightpro.org -> Store -> Applicant Guide to Supervised Practice
  - General information about all DI's but detailed information of others
    - Contact Information
    - Costs
    - Minimum GPA required to apply, Average GPA of current interns
    - Area of emphasis
    - Offer P/T
    - 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…

- **To Move Excel Columns**
  - Click on letter at top of column -> CUT (menu bar, top left)
  - Click next to column you wish to move it to (Name of Program) – Click on Insert (menu bar, top left)
Deciding which Dietetic Internships to Apply To

- Know your priorities
  - Your area of interest, ex., community, clinical
  - Affordability – do not apply to an internship you know you can’t afford, or are not willing to take out a loan for
  - 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. Every time you contact the DI director you are being ‘interviewed’.

- Attend the Internship Fair and Open House
  - Ask if you can speak with a current or prior dietetic intern
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 or online
    - Ex., New York DIs at Hunter, Lehman, NYU or Queens College (location changes each year)
  - 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
  - If you have a good reason for not be able to attend one of the above 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)
Dietetics Internship Centralized Application System (DICAS)
To start your Dietetic Internship Centralized Application System (DICAS) 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

DICAS Portal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opens</th>
<th>Application Deadline</th>
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<tr>
<td>~July 17</td>
<td>September 25</td>
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<td>~December 2</td>
<td>February 15</td>
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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

- Request from all college(s) early in the process

  - Not required but suggested you provide Transcript Request Form, available through DICAS, to each college when requesting transcripts. 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.
  
  - QC transcripts sent by the registrar office are by US mail. Transcript orders are generally fulfilled within 7-10 business days to arrive at the destination from the day you receive an email stating the request was completed.
  
  - Pending issues that must be addressed BEFORE requesting the transcript are any holds on your account, check the box to include attachment but forget to add it the order will be cancelled after 30 days after all, if any, pending issues have been resolved.
  
  - For Spring application request that your QC transcript

- This is the address your transcripts must be sent to.
  
  DICAS Transcript Department
  PO Box 9118
  Watertown, Massachusetts 02472

- If you request Overnight FedEx it must be paid through Credentials Solutions Customer Service order on-line via www.credentials-inc.com/tplus/ALUMTRO002690.
  
  - To be sent to:
    
    → DICAS – Student Name, optional -DICAS ID#)
    
    → 311 Arsenal Street
    
    → Watertown, Massachusetts (MA) 02472

- Customer service number 1-847-716-3005

- Using FedEx allows tracking

  - If you are a second bachelor’s degree student with an international transcript check with the DI directors of the programs you are applying to if they require a copy of your international transcript or an official evaluation from an agency approved by ACEND.

- DICAS will

  - Verify transcripts for authenticity
  
  - DICAS will scan them into your DICAS account so Dietetic Internship directors can view them. It takes up to 10 business days from when DICAS receives the transcript to include them in your DICAS account.
  
  - Some students are requesting 2 transcripts be sent; one without their grades for their last semester of enrollment at QC, and 1 with their last semester or enrollment

- 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.
  - [Nutrition and Dietetics Webpage](#)
- 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.
Declaration of Intent and Verification Statement

- Applicant will request either:
  - Declaration of Intent
    - For students who have not yet earned their Bachelor's degree and/or completed all DPD requirements.
    - For students applying to the Spring Feb 15 or Fall Sept 25 match and enrolled in the Fall semester.
  - Verification statement
    - For students who have received their Verification Statement earning their Bachelor’s degree and completed all DPD requirements.

- Nutrition and Dietetics Director completes online
- Sent back to the student. Student then approves with electronic signature.
- If needs editing, students to 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 to the address you have on CUNYfirst. Make sure it is up to date.
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

Required Questions that must be addressed:

- Why do you want to enter the dietetics profession?
- Discuss experiences that have helped prepare you for your career. For example:
  - Nutrition Volunteer Experience - provide specific examples; what you did and what skills you learned
  - Employment History – show how your work skills relate to skills necessary for the nutrition profession
  - Club Officer - address how you used leadership and communication skills to enhance the club goals (this can include position in clubs other than the dietetics club)
- What are your short-term and long-term goals?
  - Provide specific goals, personalized to you and what you see as your possible career path. You are not obligated to stay with this once you complete your internship.
  - Do not write “I would like to get into an internship and become an RDN once I am done with the internship”. Everyone applying wants to do this.
- What are your strengths and weaknesses or areas needing improvement?
- What other information do you consider important for the selection decision?
  - Consider aligning to the program’s mission statement and/or specific rotations that align with your goals

8000 characters, ~1000 Word limit

Compose the statement in Word – check for spelling and grammar, then and cut & paste. Do this for every draft.

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
  - DI Director may request an additional reference
  - DICAS can upload up to 4
- Email sent to reference person to fill in table (next slide) and write a paragraph about you
- Student notified when complete
- Your letters of recommendation **DO NOT** need to be complete in order for you to submit your application.
Letters of References

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUALITIES</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
<th>More than Satisfactory</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
<th>Unable to Evaluate</th>
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- An assessment of your academic/professional strengths and weakness qualities will be evaluated from the check list shown to the right.
- Written information about your strengths, weakness, area of improvement will also need be included.
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

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

- **September 25** - site closes to applicants
- ~Mid July – DICAS and DnD sites opens
- Can reorder ranking of your DI last week in October
- ~ November- notified if matched or not to a Dietetic Internship (date is different each year)
- ~ 1-2 days after match period - Second Round Match for programs with openings
- Dietetic Internships start in January
DnD Digital Ranking your DI Sites

- **Rank your DI by your preference choice!!!**
- The computer matching system will defer to your preference. For example:
  - You apply to Queens and Alaska DI’s. You put the Alaska DI as your first choice because you think your chances of getting in are better.
  - Both Queens and Alaska choose you.
  - You will be matched to Alaska.
- **Must rank them by the deadline date for submission of your DI application**
  - Feb 15 for Spring match
  - September 25 for Fall match
- But can **reorder your ranking**
  - Spring Match – last week in March
  - Fall Match ~ last week in October
DICAS Records

- Applicants matched to a dietetic internship program files will be temporarily archived.
- Applicants not matched to a dietetic internship will be saved.
  - Except for letters of recommendation, when you re-open your file you can request they be kept or deleted.
  - Declaration of Intents are not kept.
  - 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 but may change

- **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, but may change
  - www.dnddigital.com
Application Checklist

- Completed Application on DICAS and include
  - Personal Statement and other required areas
  - Letters of Reference
    - Minimum of 3
  - Resume
  - Declaration of Intent/Verification Statement
  - Transcripts mailed to DICAS
- File with DnD Digital
- Pay fees to DICAS, DnD, DI Program
Second Round/Phase II

- **Apply to Second Round/Phase II Selection**
  - 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.
  - Applicants should have a DPD verification statement or be within an academic semester of earning their verification statement.
  - Applicants do NOT have to participate in the first computer match to be eligible to apply to DI programs in the Second Round/Phase II selection. “Non-matched” applicants could be individuals who did not participate in’ first round’ the match.

- **To apply to Individualized Supervised Practice Pathways (ISPP) candidates must meet one of the following:**
  - Graduates who “did not match” to a dietetic internship, but who possess a DPD verification statement (must have participated in the match and received a “no match”); or
  - Individuals holding a doctoral degree without a DPD verification statement; however eligibility requirements and options may vary by program.
Alternative Plans

- If you did not apply or were not accepted you are asked to meet with me to receive your Verification Statements
Alternative Plans

- **Find a Job within Dietetics**
  - **Job Search Sites**
    - [NYRDJOBS@gmail.com](mailto:NYRDJOBS@gmail.com)
      - Send an e-mail to request to join; introduce yourself (i.e., your nutrition or career goal)
      - Check in 2-4 weeks, if you haven't received any emails resend
    - [http://www.nutritionjobs.com](http://www.nutritionjobs.com)
    - [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com)
    - [https://www.usajobs.gov/](https://www.usajobs.gov/)
    - [https://www.linkedin.com](https://www.linkedin.com)
Employment Opportunities

- **Clinical**
  - Nursing Homes, Hospitals, Assisted Living Facilities
  - Food Service Supervisor/Manager
    - 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, websites and blogs**
Alternative Plans

- Apply to Graduate School
- Obtain a Certification
  - ServSafe
  - Certified Dietary Manager (CDM)
  - cbdmonline.org/
  - Certified Lactation Specialist
  - IBLCE.org
Dietetic Technician, Registered (DTR) Credential Exam

- Dietetic Technician Registered (DTR) Exam
  - Request submission for the DTR exam via email to N&D Director after you have received your Verification Statements (8-12 weeks after you graduate)
  - Provide your email address and
  - Legal name shown on your driver’s license or passport which will need to be presented when you take the exam. If it does not match, even just an initial, you will be turned away and forfeit your fee for the exam.

- DTR Study Guides
  - Registration Examination for Dietetic Technicians, 7th Ed.
    - Practice Examination voucher for the Practice Registration Examination for Dietetic Technicians
  - Study Buddy 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/](http://www.op.nysed.gov/prof/diet/)

- Need 800 hours of supervised practice hours signed off by an employer or volunteer supervisor, who is an 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”