

DIETETIC INTERNSHIP (DI) PROGRAM

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS



**SCHOOL OF HUMAN ECOLOGY
COLLEGE OF APPLIED AND NATURAL SCIENCES**

LOUISIANA TECH UNIVERSITY

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The Dietetic Internship is currently granted full accreditation status by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND), the accrediting agency for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190, Chicago, IL 60606-6995, 800/877-1600 ext. 5400, a specialized accrediting body recognized by the United States Department of Education. www.eatright.org/acend

CONTACT INFORMATION**DIETETIC INTERNSHIP PROGRAM AT LOUISIANA TECH UNIVERSITY**

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Information regarding the Dietetic Internship can be found on the Louisiana Tech University website at <https://ans.latech.edu/dietetic-internship/> .

A. DESCRIPTION OF DIETETIC INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The Louisiana Tech University Dietetic Internship Program is accredited by The Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) and, fulfills ACEND requirements for entry-level dietitians. Interns are placed in one of three geographic areas: Alexandria, Monroe/Ruston, or Shreveport, Louisiana. Interns fulfill requirements in a variety of facilities within the designated city gaining experience in clinical, foodservice, and community nutrition with a medical nutrition therapy concentration. During the program, attempts are made to individualize experiences to meet interns' personal goals. Although the program encourages diverse experience in preparation for the Dietetic Internship, the Dietetic Internship at Louisiana Tech University does not have a policy for assessing prior experiential learning or competence. However, we will review transcripts for prior graduate course credit transfer.

Dietetic Internship Overview

Our next Dietetic Internship cohort will begin Sept., 2024, and will be coordinated with the Master of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics program. Expected completion will be by Spring 2026 (seven quarters total). The first Fall Quarter courses are hybrid, and students are not expected to move from their permanent location until November 2024. Master's coursework follows the academic calendar of the university and are primarily offered online. A specific program calendar will be available in the Dietetic Internship handbook for the September 2024 cohort. Undergraduate students are eligible to apply for Fall 2024 admittance if they have completed their undergraduate degree and earned a verification statement by August 2024. The Official Louisiana Tech Calendar is observed. Interns will complete a minimum of 1,200 hours of supervised practice combined with graduate coursework. In each geographic area, interns rotate through a variety of facilities which may include acute and long-term care, school food services, wellness centers, community nutrition programs, dialysis centers, rehabilitation centers, and private practices. Interns are not required to locate their facilities or preceptors in their city. Periodic on-campus seminar classes will be scheduled.

Graduate Certificate Program

In May of 2010, the Louisiana Board of Regents approved a Graduate Certificate Program in Dietetics. Effective, May 2011, dietetic interns who complete the prescribed 15 hours of graduate course work (completed with a "B" average) will be granted the Graduate Certificate in Dietetics.

Required Course Work for Graduate Certificate Program Includes:

1. FNU 504 (3 hours): Research Methods
2. FNU 548 (3 hours): Applied Dietetics
3. Two additional 500-level FNU graduate courses (6 hours)
4. One additional graduate course, to be selected from Food and Nutrition, Human Ecology, Kinesiology, Counseling, Psychology, Biological Sciences, Health Informatics and Information Management, or related area approved by advisor (3 hours).

The course work for the Graduate Certificate in Dietetics will be applied toward the Master of Science degree in Nutrition and Dietetics.

Additional Program Completion Requirements

- During the internship, interns are required to participate in pre- and post-test exams, and a RD Exam Preparation workshop.
- Interns must score an 80% or above on a comprehensive exam, pre- and post-practicum rotation quizzes, and practice exam preparation content before successfully completing the DI program. Mandatory study sessions may be scheduled.

B. MISSION STATEMENT, GOALS AND MEASUREABLE OUTCOMES OF THE DIETETIC INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Dietetic Internship Mission Statement

To prepare dietetic interns to become competent entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists who are employed in the field of dietetics; to provide service to their profession and community; while emphasizing research and continuation of graduate studies.

Dietetic Internship Goals, Objectives and Outcome Measures can be found at: <https://ans.latech.edu/dietetic-internship/program-goals-objectives/>

Program outcomes data are available upon request.

Dietetic Internship Goals, Objectives and Outcome Measures

Goal #1 – The Dietetic Internship Program will prepare interns to be competent entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists who complete the program within 150% of program length, who gain employment in the field of dietetics within 12 months of program completion, and who provide service to their profession and community.

Objective 1: 100% of preceptors who respond to the Supervising Dietitians Evaluation will “agree” interns are prepared for entry level practice upon completion of the DI program.

Objective 2: At least 80% of graduates who respond to the Post Graduate- DI Program Evaluation will report that they have provided service to the community (eg. Wellness fairs, presentations, etc.) after completion of the DI.

Objective 3: At least 80% of program interns complete program/degree requirements within 150% of the coordinate program.

Objective 4: At least 80% of program graduates will take the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists within 12 months of program completion.

Objective 5: 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%.

Objective 6: Of graduates who seek employment, 90 percent are employed in nutrition and dietetics or related fields within 12 months of graduation.

Objective 7: 100% of employers who respond to the Employer Questionnaire will indicate their employees (former interns) "are satisfactorily prepared" for entry level practice.

Objective 8 – 100% of the students who complete the DI and respond to the Post Graduate- DI Program Evaluation will "agree" they developed competence in using outcomes-based research in practice.

Objective 9 – Annually, at least 4 students who have completed the graduate program will have their research accepted for a professional presentation or manuscript.

Goal #2- The dietetic internship program will prepare interns to provide nutrition care in a society that is growing in diversity.

Objective 1: Create a learning environment that promotes diversity with intentional educational opportunities that expose 100% of students annually to issues of diversity within our profession.

Objective 2: We will document an increase in recruitment efforts to attract and retain diverse interns and preceptors through feeder universities that are identified as a pipeline for admitting diverse students.

Objective 3: Over a three-year period, 100% of internship cohorts will reflect the diversity of the community in which the university resides.

C. **ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DIETETIC INTERNSHIP (DI) PROGRAM**

ADMITTANCE TO LOUISIANA TECH UNIVERSITY DIETETIC INTERNSHIP IS BASED ON THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

1. **Documentation of Academic Preparation.** Applicants, upon final admission to the DI program, must have a bachelor's degree in nutrition or approved related field and a verification statement from an accredited university and a curriculum GPA of 2.85 or above. Academic preparation is assessed by performance in curriculum courses. These courses contribute to the attainment of the core knowledge requirements specified by ACEND and include food and nutrition, communication (English and Speech), social science, biological and physical science, and math content. These are the courses your undergraduate DPD program requires in order for you to receive your verification statement.
 - *GPA requirement of 2.85 on curriculum courses must be attained by the end of the fall semester or winter quarter.
 - *Curriculum GPA's are evaluated based on ACEND approved course equivalents to meet Knowledge Requirements for DPD programs.
2. **Admission to the Louisiana Tech University Graduate School.** Upon selection into the DI Program, students also must apply and be accepted into the Louisiana Tech Graduate School. An **official** copy of complete transcripts from all universities attended must be submitted to the Graduate School along with the application.

Complete the graduate school application, application fee, and send official copy of complete transcripts directly to the Louisiana Tech University Graduate School. You can apply to graduate school online at

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<https://www.latech.edu/study-with-us/graduate/admission-apply/>. Apply for admission to the College of Applied & Natural Sciences for both the Master of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics and the Graduate Certificate Program. You will only pay one fee.

As a component of the application, letters of recommendations are required. However, upon acceptance into the program, your DICAS recommendations will be submitted to the Graduate School by the program faculty.

3. **Application to the Dietetic Internship.** Please be advised that all components should be sent electronically. The Application Process includes:

DICAS:

The Louisiana Tech University Dietetic Internship Program uses the online centralized internship application, DICAS, which may be accessed at <https://portal.dicas.org/>. DICAS will be available on August 5, 2024 for the Spring 2025 Match. The online application must be completed for the Louisiana Tech DI program by 11:59 p.m. Central Time on February 15, 2025. There is a fee for DICAS for the first application submitted and an additional fee for each additional application.

Personal Statement. Applicants applying through DICAS will be asked to complete a personal statement in 1,000 words or less. Questions to be addressed in the personal statement include:

- *Why do you want to enter the dietetics profession?
- *What are some experiences that have helped to prepare you for your career?
- *What are your short-term and long-term goals?
- *What are your strengths and weaknesses or areas needing improvement?

Official copy of complete transcripts. All accumulated and transfer credits, except courses in which you are currently enrolled, will be evaluated by the Graduate School at Louisiana Tech University and the Director of the Dietetic Internship. **Official** transcripts from all colleges and universities attended should be sent to the Graduate School **and** to DICAS at:

Graduate School:

Louisiana Tech University
The Graduate School
P.O. Box 7923
Ruston, LA 71272

DICAS:

DICAS – Transcript Department
P.O. Box 9118
Watertown, MA 02472

Student copies of transcripts are **not** acceptable.

Foreign degrees must be validated by an Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics-recommended agency. Transcript evaluation must take place prior to the application deadline. Visit their website at: <https://www.eatrightpro.org/>.

DICAS References. When completing the application form, applicants must include the name and contact information (specifically an e-mail address) for each reference. This will trigger an e-mail message requesting completion of a reference form. The form will be completed online.

For the Louisiana Tech DI, three references are required and are preferred from those who can verify and provide feedback on academic preparation and document information on paid or volunteer work experience. Two letters must be an academic reference and one must be a work-related or volunteer reference. Do not include references from personal friends or family.

Verification Statement or Declaration of Intent. Applicants who have completed an undergraduate program should select the option to send an official statement of Verification of Completion of the Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) with original signatures. Applicants who have not graduated from an undergraduate program should select the option of Declaration of Intent to complete academic requirements with original signatures.

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The DPD Director will be notified to submit a verification statement or declaration of intent.

Evaluation Criteria is ranked on the following in descending order:
Curriculum GPA, statement of goals, recommendations, and volunteer work/experience.

Supplemental Materials. Upload a copy of Resume and City Preference ranking (page 10).

4. Applicants will be notified of their acceptance into the DI program by March 1, 2025. Applicants should notify DI director of decision to accept offer by March 15, 2025.

D. RECENCY OF EDUCATION POLICY FOR ADMISSION INTO THE DI PROGRAM

According to Louisiana Tech University policy, students who have earned a DPD verification statement within the last five years have met recency of education requirements. Those earning a verification statement greater than five years prior to the application due date should have their academic transcripts reviewed to determine whether coursework will be required prior to applying to the internship.

E. ACADEMIC AND PROGRAM CALENDAR

The dietetic internship adheres to the academic calendar of Louisiana Tech University. The LA Tech academic calendar can be found on the Tech website at <https://www.latech.edu/current-students/academic-calendar/>. Dietetic interns are granted the same holidays and breaks as all Louisiana Tech students. During non-scheduled time off, interns are otherwise scheduled in facilities for practicum rotations during the academic quarter(s). The Dietetic Internship calendar documenting time in facilities, holidays, breaks, and class commitments is provided at the start of the program.

F. PROGRAM COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS

Completion of the Dietetic Internship requires successfully passing all the requirements of FNU 592: *Internship in Nutrition/Dietetics*. Interns must also maintain good standing within the graduate program and meet all requirements for completion of the graduate program in order to successfully complete the dietetic internship.

Requirements for successful completion of FNU 592 are as follows:

1. The ACEND competency requirements must be completed satisfactorily and verified by preceptors or Tech faculty. Verification of performance requirements is documented in the Activity Record.
2. Professional behavior reviews conducted by preceptors/adjunct faculty at the completion of each rotation, scheduled for two weeks or longer, must consistently document that the intern is performing at an acceptable level. The "Progressive Discipline for Student Performance Problems" policy will be adhered to if problems are identified. Interns must comply with the policy and fulfill requirements for successful completion of the program.
3. Interns must fulfill 1,200 clock hours of practice time through practicum requirements in the facilities and/or through other assigned activities.
4. Documentation of completed Activity Record and a completed portfolio of work must be submitted to the DI Program Director before completion of the program.

5. Participation in RD practice exam class requirements and workshop. Must receive a score of 80% or above on comprehensive RD practice exam and all pre- and post-rotation quizzes.
6. FNU 592 is a pass/fail course. Successful completion of listed requirements will result in a passing grade for the course.
7. Maintain good standing and meet all requirements for completion of the graduate program.

In the event that a leave of absence is necessary prior to program completion for purposes of documented medical leave, family emergency, and/or military leave the following procedures are to be taken:

- Intern must submit written request to the Nutrition and Dietetics Program Development Committee for evaluation.
- Request will be evaluated on an individual basis. Approval is at the discretion of the Nutrition and Dietetics Program Development Committee who will consider issues such as availability of practicum facility, staff, Louisiana Tech resources and available slots.

G. CREDENTIALING PROCESS FOR DIETETIC PRACTITIONERS

The Louisiana Tech University Dietetic Internship is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND), the accrediting agency for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Interns will fulfill the ACEND performance requirements while enrolled in the dietetic internship. A verification statement is granted from the DI Program Director upon successful completion of the Dietetic Internship program requirements and the Master of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics. Graduates are then qualified to apply for the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) registration exam. Graduates must pass the CDR registration exam to become registered dietitians and practice as entry level dietitians. Information regarding licensure is provided at <https://www.cdrnet.org/state-licensure>. Registered dietitians practicing in Louisiana must also be licensed unless they meet exemption criteria.

Rate preference of city (1=first, 2=second, 3=third) in which you would like to be placed.

_____ Alexandria

_____ Monroe

_____ Shreveport

_____ No Preference

I am aware that this does not guarantee placement in my preferred city.

I am aware that students must provide their own housing and transportation. I understand that a professional program fee, in addition to the university tuition, is assessed each quarter during the Dietetic Internship.

I am aware that before entering the program, I must submit official final transcripts and a Verification Statement.

The Louisiana Tech University Dietetic Internship portion of the coordinated program is based on the academic calendar established by Louisiana Tech University. A Louisiana Tech University academic calendar can be obtained on the Tech website at www.latech.edu. A Dietetic Internship calendar, which coincides with Louisiana Tech's, will be provided upon acceptance into the DI. If additional information is required concerning starting dates and completion dates, please contact the Dietetic Internship Program Director.

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE: _____

Requirements upon acceptance into the program:

1. Upon selection into the Dietetic Internship Program, students also must apply and be accepted into the Graduate School in both the Graduate Certificate and the Masters in Nutrition and Dietetics. An **official** copy of complete transcripts from all universities attended must be submitted to the Graduate School.
<https://www.latech.edu/study-with-us/graduate/admission-apply/>
2. Physician statement verifying ability to function in practice facilities, that all immunizations are up to date, and that tetanus shot was received within the past 10 years.
3. Proof of health insurance.
4. Proof of professional liability insurance.
5. Verification of TB Skin test and minimum start of Hepatitis B vaccination series if not already completed.
6. Proof of updated immunization records.
7. A drug and alcohol screening and/or criminal background check may be required before placement in facilities.
8. Signed DPD Verification Statement from your DPD Program Director (original, not in black ink).
9. Current Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics membership card
10. All Dietetic Interns are required to abide by the policies of each healthcare facility they are in for rotations, including vaccination requirements. Interns who do not meet the requirements of a healthcare facility, including COVID-19 vaccination status, are not guaranteed placement in that facility or an alternative facility, which will impede completion of the program.

Dietetic Internship Application Checklist
Louisiana Tech University

Items to Remember:

- ___1. Application to the Louisiana Tech University Dietetic Internship through DICAS

- ___2. Transcripts sent to the Louisiana Tech University Graduate School and DICAS

- ___3. Resume and City Preference Ranking- uploaded in the supplemental materials section as part of DICAS

Immediately Upon Selection into the Dietetic Internship:

- ___4. Complete online Graduate School Application to both the Graduate Certificate and the Masters in Nutrition and Dietetics Program
<https://www.latech.edu/study-with-us/graduate/admission-apply/>

- ___5. Graduate School Application Fee (paid to the Louisiana Tech University Graduate School)