

Dear Prospective Preceptor:

Iowa State University (ISU) offers an accredited dietetic internship (DI) with two options: Iowa-based and Nationwide. The Iowa-based option is completed at selected locations throughout the State of Iowa (and just across its borders) and the Nationwide option is completed in the intern's "home" location.

All of the program materials are located on the ISU Dietetics Academy website: <http://www.dietetics.iastate.edu/>, select "dietetic internship."

The ISU Dietetics Internship is a 6-month generalist program. This program plans for 960 hours and, thus, is about 24 weeks in length and meets the Commission on Accreditation of Dietetics Education (CADE) minimum requirements of 900 hours of supervised practice experiences. There are two internship classes each year; each class has approximately 20 interns of which 4-8 are in the Nationwide option.

- Class one begins in early January and ends in mid June.
- Class two begins in early June and ends the Friday before Thanksgiving in November.

Because the interns in both options are geographically distant from the ISU campus, WebCT has been utilized for over 10 years to provide on-line support for the internship. Interns are required to have internet access for the entire program. WebCT provides communication tools (e-mail, bulletin board, etc.) and supplemental educational information that is divided into learning modules for Community Nutrition, Operational (Food Service) Management, and Medical Nutrition Therapy. Each overall module then contains information about different topics pertinent to the content area.

In addition to the supplemental WebCT module readings, the interns have a list of assignments and experiences that they are expected to complete during their internship. These are designed to ensure that the intern meets the different entry-level competencies put forth by CADE. The ISU program faculty will review the completed assignments – that's not a preceptor responsibility. In addition, the intern is required to complete patient case studies, literature reviews, other assorted projects, as well as application exams – all of which are used as assessment tools. Again, review and evaluation of these components of the intern's work is the responsibility of the ISU program faculty.

You, as the preceptor, are asked to:

- provide the supervised practice experience opportunities for the intern;
 - allow the intern to shadow and observe you; then—
 - supervise the intern as s/he performs as much of your duties as possible;
 - co-sign the intern's notes and recommendations; and
 - complete various evaluation forms on the intern's work and professional behavior.
- Also, we require that the intern and preceptor complete a weekly "log" that proves the number of hours the intern has completed that week.

The ISU faculty member assigned to the intern will visit the intern at least one time during the 6-month period. This is an opportunity to meet the preceptors and to answer questions (from both the intern and the preceptors) as well as a method for the instructor to evaluate and assess the intern's skill/knowledge development.

The program fees for the intern are:

Tuition and fees – approximately \$6,000-\$7,000

Travel costs:

- 1) Intern must attend orientation week in Ames, IA and is responsible for all costs incurred related to this week.
- 2) Instructor costs related to on-site visit to the intern and preceptors. This includes: airfare (or mileage), lodging, and \$50 per diem.

Please note – the applicants are told from the beginning that preference is given to qualified applicants who have at least 5 years work experience (this may be an “older” intern) and who have experience with on-line course work. All reasonable attempts are made to screen for those individuals who will be self-starters, leaders, self-directed learners. This program is not for the intern who needs close supervision from faculty, preceptors, etc. While it may seem a bit “unfair” that the applicant must complete a great deal of planning with the risk of not getting into the program, this is a crucial step because plans must be in place at the beginning of the program.

Please be assured that:

- Professional liability insurance is maintained on our students.
- The intern is required to carry his/her own health insurance.
- The intern must provide a completed health/medical examination form, which includes immunization records and proof of TB testing.
- The intern is trained in HIPAA, CPR, First Aid, and Universal Precautions.
- The ISU DI also hires an accredited agency to conduct criminal and abuse background checks for incoming ISU interns. The results of the checks will be maintained in the intern’s placement file; of course, if anything questionable is found, appropriate preceptors will be informed and necessary steps taken.
- The intern will have specific assignments and project goals and objectives that s/he is to complete throughout the internship. S/He will provide these to you upon request. Information about the ISU DI may be found on our website: <http://www.iastate.edu/>.

The affiliation agreement is used for all facilities where the intern is in place longer than 5 days. Affiliation agreements will be completed between Iowa State University legal counsel and the precepting facility after the intern has been matched to the program. Occasionally some facilities prefer to use their own version of an agreement, in that case the legal counsel of ISU and the facility will work together to reach agreement.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. I am most easily reached via email: janderso@iastate.edu. Thank you for assisting this prospective intern.

Sincerely,

Jean Anderson, MS, RD, LD
Dietetic Internship Director