

REQUIREMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION

One goal of the Iowa State University dietetic internship is to develop intern competency in the following areas of leadership, time management, critical thinking, assessment/problem solving, and effective communication. At Iowa State University, interns are required to demonstrate mastery of content areas to the internship faculty via predetermined assignments and projects, while preceptors assess and evaluate the intern's day-to-day skill progression. The fast pace of the internship dictates that the successful intern is one who communicates clearly, is self-directed, and is somewhat independent.

COMPONENTS OF SATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE

The American Dietetic Association ("ADA") core competencies specify what every dietitian should be able to do at the beginning of his or her practice career. The core competency statements build on appropriate knowledge and skills necessary for the entry-level practitioner to perform reliably. See the ISU Dietetic Internship Handbook pp. 2-4 for a listing of the competencies. The intern must also complete his or her internship in accordance with the Dietetic Intern Position Description. In order to receive the verification statement from Iowa State University that establishes eligibility to take the national registration exam, the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition requires that the dietetics interns successfully meet all ADA core competencies prior to completion of the dietetics internship as well as demonstrate satisfactory performance in the following:

Effective Communication (oral and written, individual and team, formal and informal) as evidenced by:

- Participate in all required communication **with ISU faculty, assigned mentor and preceptors.**
- Weekly written journal due to assigned instructor by 5 pm on Tuesday of each week of the internship.
 - Active participation in individual and group discussions either in person or via website to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of topic.
 - Other communication both oral and written as assigned.
 - Successful completion of oral and written reports as assigned.
 - Completion of rubrics for self assessment of professional progress.
 - Email is considered an official means of communicating with interns. All interns are responsible for checking their ISU assigned WebCT email account in a timely manner.

Effective Time Management as evidenced by:

- Attendance at all professional meetings and requirements.
 - Any absences must be reported to preceptor and instructor.
- Attendance at conferences and appointments at scheduled times.
 - If unable to keep an appointment, it must be cancelled appropriately and re-scheduled.

- Assignments, projects, and other internship requirements are completed within the assigned time frame. If additional work on the assignment or requirement is necessary to achieve mastery or entry-level competence, this work is completed within the agreed upon time frame.
- Respectful of other people's time: preceptors, instructors, and other interns.
 - Schedules appointments, prepares questions and concerns in advance, is prepared for all meetings.

Problem solving and Critical thinking evidenced by:

Critical within this area are the requirements for the interns to develop flexibility, initiative and an ability to work with others when engaged in problem solving. In addition, the intern:

- Demonstrates knowledge and skills appropriate for entry-level dietitian as defined in the ADA competency list.
 - **All assignments are reviewed by the instructor.** The instructor may require that the intern revise assignments to meet a level of mastery and competence. Revisions must be completed within the agreed upon time frame.
 - Level of mastery/competence is measured according to a 3 point scale using Novice, Beginner, and Competent as endpoints.
 - Intern is encouraged/allowed to complete additional work and review as necessary to achieve the expected level of mastery and competence.
 - Interns must complete the assigned learning activities as required.
 - Learning activities are outlined for each rotation. Some additional assignments may be added at the discretion of the site preceptor or instructor.
 - Interns complete Comprehensive Case Reviews (CCR) throughout the internship. The CCR measures the intern's ability to assess appropriate data, identify the primary nutritional diagnoses, write a PES statement, and delineate a nutrition care plan. This also serves as a window to the interns' ability to manage time, communicate effectively, and validate the preceptor evaluations of the intern.
 - Interns maintain an electronic portfolio throughout the internship. This is used to store artifacts and reflections that serve to document that all required assignments and experiences in the internship are satisfactorily completed.

Interns are expected to complete these responsibilities with or without accommodation. Please contact the Program Director if you require assistance in performing these responsibilities.

COMPONENTS OF EVALUATION

Evaluation is an important component of the internship and continues throughout the professional career. Interns will have the opportunity to develop skills in self evaluation during the internship course work and planned experiences. Interns, ISU faculty and preceptors in the facilities participate in the performance evaluation conferences scheduled in the various practice sites. The conferences identify areas of strength and areas lacking preparation and experience. All conferences should be viewed as positive opportunities for feedback to encourage continued growth and performance of dietetic practitioner skills. Interns can expect to receive oral feedback from preceptors throughout the internship.

Internship faculty are available for onsite evaluation for all interns as required, irrespective of the location of the facility. Any additional travel expense incurred as the result of the need for trips to personally consult with the intern or facility will be the responsibility of the intern.

University policy dictates that the instructor shall inform the students/interns at the beginning of each course of the evaluation procedures planned for use in the course. Additional university policy information related to grading, evaluation and record keeping is found at this website: <http://www.iastate.edu/~catalog/2003-05/geninfo/grades.htm>

Formal Evaluation occurs at pre-determined times throughout the internship using specifically prepared ISU DI forms. Evaluations include both assessments of the intern's progress as well as assessments of the intern's knowledge and performance in rotations. Preceptors/instructors completing the evaluation use the provided form and review with the intern prior to signatures. It is the intern's responsibility to be familiar with the various evaluation forms so that he/she is aware of the criteria and timing for each evaluation. The form is returned to the instructor.

Interns can expect to receive formal evaluations in the following formats:

- written evaluations from preceptors,
- rubrics for oral presentations,
- exams in the form of comprehensive care reviews,
- scored assignments.

Informal Evaluation

Many opportunities exist for informal information about performance. These should be viewed as positive opportunities to gain insight and adjust performance. Examples of informal evaluation include, but are not limited to, daily feedback/discussions with preceptors on skill development, clinical documentation, presentations, and projects.

Intern Evaluation of Rotation

Forms are provided for the intern to evaluate his/her experience in the rotation. These forms are used to evaluate future improvements in the program as well as provide feedback to preceptors.

Unsatisfactory performance

The intern is graded on a “satisfactory-fail” basis. The first time an intern’s academic work and/or performance is evaluated as unsatisfactory, the intern will be provided with an opportunity to improve to a satisfactory level. Upon notice that the intern has received an unsatisfactory evaluation, the department shall provide for the following:

- Increased faculty visits and/or contacts as dictated by the situation.
- A verbal warning to the intern that evaluations of written assignments and/or performance are not within the satisfactory range.
- Documentation of the verbal warning placed in the intern’s permanent file.
- A meeting with the intern to discuss and develop terms and conditions for improvement with a time-line for review.
- A letter written to the intern, with copies to the preceptor and intern’s permanent file, which includes the specific terms and conditions agreed upon that the intern must fulfill in order to improve to a satisfactory level.

If the intern receives a second written warning or fails to meet the agreed upon terms and conditions for improvement within the specified time-line, the intern shall be dismissed from the program. Throughout this process, the intern, ISU faculty member and preceptors are involved in the evaluation, discipline, and termination of the intern.

Note also that interns can receive “unsatisfactory performance” in relationship to inappropriate behavior and perceived attitudes. This includes, but is not limited to, chronic tardiness and/or missed work, and insubordination to faculty, preceptors, or facility staff.

Interns will be immediately dismissed from the internship for the following: theft, bringing weapons of any sort to the facility or campus, verbally or physically threatening or harassing patients/clients, faculty, preceptors, facility staff or fellow-interns.

Interns have the right to appeal a dismissal for these reasons under the Iowa State University Academic Grievance procedures (located at the ISU Dean of Students website: <http://www.dso.iastate.edu/>).

NOTE: In order to receive the verification statement, necessary for eligibility to write the examination for Registered Dietitian credential, the intern must complete all assignments and rotations at the satisfactory level with demonstration of competence. Merely completing the six-month internship program does not guarantee receipt of the verification statement.