
III. Knowledge, Skills, and Competencies for Entry-Level Dietitian Education Programs

Foundation Knowledge and Skills for Didactic Component

The entry-level dietitian is knowledgeable in the eight areas listed below. The foundation knowledge and skills precede achievement of the core and emphasis area(s) competencies, which identify the performance level expected upon completion of the supervised practice program.

Foundation learning has two parts: (1) knowledge of a topic as it applies to the profession of dietetics and (2) ability to demonstrate the skill at a level that can be developed further. To successfully achieve the foundation knowledge and skills, graduates must have demonstrated the ability to communicate and collaborate, solve problems, and apply critical thinking skills.

1. COMMUNICATIONS

Graduates will have *knowledge of*:

- Negotiation techniques
- Lay and technical writing
- Media presentations
- Interpersonal communication skills
- Counseling theory and methods
- Interviewing techniques
- Educational theory and techniques
- Concepts of human and group dynamics
- Public speaking
- Educational materials development

Graduates will have *demonstrated the ability to*:

- Use oral and written communications in presenting an educational session for a group
- Counsel individuals on nutrition
- Document appropriately a variety of activities
- Explain a public policy position regarding dietetics
- Use current information technologies
- Work effectively as a team member

2. PHYSICAL AND BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

Graduates will have *knowledge of*:

- Exercise physiology
- Genetics
- General health assessment, e.g., blood pressure and vital signs
- Organic chemistry
- Biochemistry
- Physiology
- Microbiology
- Nutrient metabolism
- Pathophysiology related to nutrition care
- Fluid and electrolyte requirements
- Pharmacology: nutrient-nutrient and drug-nutrient interaction

Graduates will have *demonstrated the ability to*:

- Interpret medical terminology
- Interpret laboratory parameters relating to nutrition
- Apply microbiological and chemical considerations to process controls

3. SOCIAL SCIENCES

Graduates will have *knowledge of*:

- Public policy development
- Psychology
- Health behaviors and educational needs of diverse populations
- Economics and nutrition

4. RESEARCH

Graduates will have *knowledge of*:

- Research methodologies
- Needs assessments
- Outcomes-based research
- Scientific method
- Quality improvement methods

Graduates will have *demonstrated the ability to*:

- Interpret current research
- Interpret basic statistics

5. FOOD

Graduates will have *knowledge of*:

- Food technology
- Biotechnology
- Culinary techniques
- Sociocultural and ethnic food consumption issues and trends
- Food safety and sanitation
- Food delivery systems
- Food and nonfood procurement
- Availability of food and nutrition programs in the community
- Local, state, and national food security policy
- Food production systems
- Environmental issues related to food
- Role of food in promotion of a healthy lifestyle
- Promotion of pleasurable eating
- Food and nutrition laws/regulations/policies
- Food availability and access for the individual, family, and community
- Applied sensory evaluation of food

Graduates will have *demonstrated the ability to*:

- Calculate and interpret nutrient composition of foods
- Determine recipe/formula proportions and modifications for volume food production
- Apply food science knowledge to functions of ingredients in food
- Demonstrate basic food preparation and presentation skills
- Modify recipe/formula for individual or group dietary needs

6. NUTRITION

Graduates will have knowledge of:

- Evolving methods of assessing health status
- Influence of age, growth, and normal development on nutritional requirements
- Nutrition and metabolism
- Assessment and treatment of nutritional health risks
- Medical nutrition therapy
- Strategies to assess need for adaptive feeding techniques and equipment
- Health promotion and disease prevention theories and guidelines
- Influence of socioeconomic, cultural, and psychological factors on food and nutrition behavior
- Complementary and alternative nutrition and herbal therapies
- Dietary supplements

Graduates will have demonstrated the ability to:

- Calculate and/or define diets for health conditions addressed by health promotion/disease prevention activities or uncomplicated instances of chronic diseases of the general population, e.g., hypertension, obesity, diabetes, and diverticular disease
- Screen individuals for nutritional risk
- Collect pertinent information for comprehensive nutrition assessments
- Determine nutrient requirements across the lifespan
- Translate nutrition needs into food choices and menus for people of diverse cultures and religions
- Measure, calculate, and interpret body composition data
- Calculate enteral and parenteral nutrition formulations

7. MANAGEMENT

Graduates will have knowledge of:

- Program planning, monitoring, and evaluation
- Strategic management
- Facility management
- Organizational change theory
- Risk management
- Management theories
- Human resource management, including labor relations
- Materials management
- Financial management, including accounting principles
- Quality improvement
- Information management
- Systems theory
- Marketing theory and techniques
- Diversity issues

Graduates will have demonstrated the ability to:

- Determine costs of services/operation
- Prepare a budget
- Interpret financial data
- Apply marketing principles
- Develop a personal portfolio

8. HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS

Graduates will have knowledge of:

- Health care policy and administration
- Health care delivery systems
- Current reimbursement issues, policies, and regulations