

Nutrition and Dietetics Educators and Preceptors (NDEP) were recently told by Academy leaders that they have no input major changes recently adopted by the Academy's BOD. NDEP members view these recommendations as items for discussion by the general membership rather than final decisions by leadership since these are significant and costly changes to our profession.

The following two topics have received considerable attention at NDEP regional meetings:

Topic#1: Undergraduates who do not obtain an internship would be designated as "Nutrition and Dietetics Associates (NDA)" after passing an exam (comprehensive except for MNT). The exam would be voluntary. No CPEU will be required for individuals in this designation.

Major questions and concerns:

- What's the impact of NDA on RD and DTR credentials and will the name confuse the public?
- Without continuing education requirements, how will standards be maintained?
- Why aren't we allowed to vote on this? A straw vote at two of the three regional meetings, so far, overwhelmingly rejected the NDA designation.
- Will this prevent us from finding more preceptors/internships or supporting current preceptors?

Topic #2: In 2024, a graduate degree (any degree area) is required to be eligible for the RD exam.

- What evidence exists for an RD to obtain a graduate degree in order to practice effectively?
- Are employers demanding this and will they hire RDs with a graduate degree?
- What competencies to establish graduate programs are there? (Currently none, although a practice audit with RDs identified critical thinking, leadership and advocacy were needed).
- Why hasn't ACEND been allowed to complete a study on the required graduate competencies? {Note: ACEND plans to conduct research to see any difference in competencies between undergraduates and graduate prepared RDs; and conduct research with stakeholders}
- Why is the Academy supportive of creating RDs with graduate degrees but NOT supportive of educating RDs who practice at a graduate level?

Additional concern: the decision making process was not transparent or inclusive of members, no voting by our HOD representatives, nor quantitative feedback from members, i.e. voting.

NDEP would like to ensure that the entire membership be involved in the conversation. Efforts are being made to provide this avenue through the LinkedIn group: Visioning RD, RDN, DTR (<http://www.linkedin.com/grp/>)