

DIETETIC INTERNSHIP CERTIFICATE

Translate science into solutions for health.

Loyola University Chicago offers two tracks of an accredited Dietetic Internship (DI) to prepare students to become professional registered dietitian nutritionists. Students benefit from the constructive and supportive environment of Loyola University Chicago. With Jesuit values as a foundation, students learn leadership, communication, and management skills which are applied to dietetic practice in health care and other settings. This prepares our students to enter dietetic practice as competent, highly qualified professionals after passing the registration exam for dietitians. Graduates of Loyola's Dietetic Internship program are highly sought for positions in health care and nutrition programs. Students enter a wide range of dietetic careers, including:

- Clinical dietitians with health care organizations including hospitals, medical centers, dialysis centers, skilled nursing, and rehabilitation facilities
- Community nutritionists with public health departments, federally qualified health centers, community clinics, and federal nutrition programs such as the Women, Infant, and Children's program
- Director or manager of food service operations
- Private practice or consulting

To Become a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist

To become a registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) The following criteria must be completed:

1. Completion of a bachelor's degree at a US regionally accredited university or college and course work accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND®) of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics,
2. Completion of an ACEND®-accredited supervised practice program, such as the Loyola Dietetic Internship,
3. Pass the Registration Examination for Dietitians, national examination administered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR).
4. More information regarding the examination can be found online through CDR (<https://www.cdrnet.org/>).
5. Licensure is required to practice as a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist in the State of Illinois (<https://www.idfpr.com/profs/dietNutrition.asp>)

To maintain the RDN credential, one must complete continuing professional education requirements.

Effective January 1, 2024, the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) will require the minimum of a master's degree to be eligible for the credentialing examination for registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN). For more information about this requirement, please refer to the CDR website (<https://www.cdrnet.org/>).

Professional Dietetic Practice

Upon successful completion of all LDI program requirements (supervised practice, didactic, seminars, and others based on track), students receive a verification statement of completion of the ACEND - accredited

dietetic internship and are eligible to take the *Registration Examination for Dietitians* by the Commission on Dietetic Registration. In the State of Illinois, one must be licensed by the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation to practice dietetics. Information about licensure for dietitians in Illinois can be obtained at: <http://www.idfpr.com/Renewals/apply/Forms/diet-ex.pdf>.

Additional information about licensure for dietetic practice in other states can be found online (<https://www.cdrnet.org/>).

Accreditation

The Loyola University Chicago Dietetic Internship (LDI) is accredited by the Council on Accreditation for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) an agency of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND). Upon successful completion of all LDI program requirements (supervised practice, didactic, seminars and others based on program track), students receive an ACEND verification statement and are eligible to take the Registration Examination for Dietitians by the Commission on Dietetic Registration. Information about accreditation status can be obtained from:

Accreditation for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190
Chicago, IL 60606-6995
1-800-877-1600 ext 5400 or education@eatright.org

Curriculum

The Loyola Dietetic Internship offers two options or tracks to completion: Dietetic Internship Certificate track (DI/C) or a combined Master of Science in Dietetics/Dietetic Internship (MS/DI).

Dietetic Internship Certificate track (DI/C)

This is 7 courses, 14 credits and includes 1100 hours of supervised practice as part of FONU 423, FONU 425, and FONU 427.

Upon completion of the DI/C requirements, the student receives the ACEND Verification Statement of Completion of a Dietetic Internship and is eligible to take the *Registration Examination for Dietitians*.

Code	Title	Hours
Didactic Courses		
FONU 400	Role Development in Dietetic Practice	1
FONU 420	Transition to Supervised Practice in the Dietetic Internship	1
FONU 422	Medical Nutrition Therapy Theory	3
FONU 424	Public Health Nutrition and Research Theory for Dietetic Practice	3
FONU 426	Food Management Theory: Geriatric Nutrition	1
Supervised Practice Courses		
FONU 423	Supervised Practice (SP) in Medical Nutrition Therapy	2
FONU 425	Supervised Practice in Public Health Nutrition, Research, Professional Development & Marketing	2
FONU 427	Supervised Practice: Food Management, Geriatric Nutrition	1
Total Hours		14

Combined Master of Science in Dietetics/Dietetic Internship (MS/DI)

This is 20 courses, 46 credits and includes 1200 hours of supervised practice as part of FONU 423, FONU 425, and FONU 427, and the comprehensive exam.

Upon completion of the MS/DI requirements, the student receives the ACEND Verification Statement of Completion of a Dietetic Internship and is eligible to take the *Registration Examination for Dietitians*, and a Master of Science in Dietetics degree from the Loyola University Chicago Graduate School.

Code	Title	Hours
Dietetics Internship Courses		
<i>Didactic Courses</i>		
FONU 400	Role Development in Dietetic Practice	1
FONU 420	Transition to Supervised Practice in the Dietetic Internship	1
FONU 422	Medical Nutrition Therapy Theory	3
FONU 424	Public Health Nutrition and Research Theory for Dietetic Practice	3
FONU 426	Food Management Theory: Geriatric Nutrition	1
<i>Supervised Practice</i>		
FONU 423	Supervised Practice (SP) in Medical Nutrition Therapy	2
FONU 425	Supervised Practice in Public Health Nutrition, Research, Professional Development & Marketing	2
FONU 427	Supervised Practice: Food Management, Geriatric Nutrition	1
Dietetics (MS) Requirements		
<i>Core</i>		
FONU 410	Nutrition Focused Physical Assessment	2
FONU 501	Writing and Communications in Nutrition and Dietetics	3
FONU 503	Dietetic Theories & Research Methods	3
FONU 507	Behavioral Change for Health Promotion	3
MPBH 404	Biostatistics for Health and Biological Science	3
<i>Health Care Administration Focus</i>		
MHA 405	U.S. Health Systems Management	3
MHA 415	Culture of Quality & Safety in Health Care	3
MPBH 495	Special Topics	3
or MHA 460	Strategy and Leadership in Healthcare Organizations	3
MPBH 407	Public Health Policy: Concepts and Practice	3
or SOWK 602	Health and Behavioral Health Policy and Systems	3
MHA 451	Healthcare Finance I	3
<i>Electives</i>		
Select from the following:		
MPBH 400	Determinants of Population Health	3
MPBH 402	Public Health Practice and Management	3
MPBH 403	Introduction to Epidemiology	3
MPBH 413	The Epidemiology of Obesity: An Energy Balance Perspective	3
MPBH 414	Introduction to Global Health	3
MPBH 417	Global Maternal & Child Health	3
MPBH 431	Grant Writing	3

MPBH 495	Special Topics	
Total Hours		46

Once a week, students are required to participate in class at the Loyola University Health Sciences Division (HSD) campus in Maywood, IL. Class time is not calculated in the supervised-practice hours and typically are scheduled from 6 p.m. - 9 p.m. Classes include lecture, discussion, group problem-solving, critical-thinking activities, exams, and additional assignments. In addition to the courses below, dietetic interns are required to attend seminars, both internal and external to the University, that enhance knowledge and skill development.

Please note that completion of the MS in Dietetics (<https://catalog.luc.edu/graduate-professional/health-sciences/dietetics-ms/>) degree also requires successful comprehensive exam completion according to policies of the Parkinson School of Health Sciences and Public Health.

Details about the Loyola academic calendar, including the start dates of each semester, can be found online (<https://www.luc.edu/academics/schedules/index.shtml/>).

Download the Loyola Dietetic Internship (LDI) program plan (<https://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/schoolhealthsciencespublichealth/documents/LDIProgramPlan.pdf>). For additional questions, please contact: Joanne Kouba, (jkouba@luc.edu) PhD, RD, LDN, Director, Dietetics Education Programs. Also see the Dietetics Handbook Aug 2023 (<https://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/parkinson/pdfs/LDI.Handbook.revised.2023.08.28.Final.pdf>).

Internship

Two Options For Completing the Loyola Dietetic Internship

Each track meets ACEND standards for dietetic internships. Ten students are admitted annually to each track of the LDI as coordinated by nationwide, computerized matching by D&D Digital (<https://www.dnddigital.com/>).

Anticipation Time for Completion

- DI/C: 13 months
- MS/DI: 22 months

Credits

- DI/C: 14
- MS/DI: 46

D&D Digital Matching Number

- DI/C: 494
- MS/DI: 156

Both tracks are eligible to take the registration examination for dietitians.

Hours of Supervised Practice

- DI only: 1100
- MS/DI: 1100

Supervised Practice Starts

- DI/C: The first semester after admission
- MS/DI: After completing majority of graduate work

Upon Completion Student Receives

- DI/C: ACEND verification state of DI completion
- MS/DI: ACEND verification statement of DI completion and Loyola Master of Science (MS) in Dietetics degree

Supervised Practice Experiences Summary

Interns complete eight rotations during the course of the program, which are nested within FONU 423, FONU 425, and FONU 427. Interns are typically scheduled to complete supervised practice eight hours per day, typically Monday through Friday. Interns should expect to be in supervised practice two-three weekend days per semester. Time for travel is not part of supervised practice.

FONU 423 Supervised Practice (SP) in Medical Nutrition Therapy

Medical Nutrition Therapy (55 days): Interns develop skills to meet the responsibilities of a clinical dietitian and follow the host facility's standards of care and practice guidelines. Interns are initially assigned a low number of assessment, screening, educational, and follow-up activities per week on less-complex patients. As the weeks proceed, interns are assigned more complex cases and the volume of patients increases. In addition, interns participate in the quality management program for clinical nutrition care, in-service presentations, patient care conferences, and departmental meetings.

Dialysis Medical Therapy (5 days): Interns develop medical nutrition therapy skills with a focus on renal patients.

FONU 425 Supervised Practice in Public Health Nutrition, Research, Professional Development & Marketing

Public Health Nutrition (35 days): This experience allows interns to work with diverse age groups, as well as socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. Interns are involved in planning and delivering nutrition programs including those provided by the Women, Infant, Children (WIC) special supplemental nutrition program, schools and school-based health clinics, Catholic Charities, and outpatient departments.

Professional Development (10 days): Students identify an area of professional dietetic practice that they would like to explore with additional experiences. The DI Director and student collaborate to develop this individualized experience using available resources.

Research (10 days): Students develop and engage in scholarly inquiry under the direction of faculty and preceptors, including perspectives of ethical considerations, research methods, statistical analysis, and dissemination of findings. Projects may be individual, group, and/or at other supervised practice sites.

Marketing Rotation (5 days): Interns have the opportunity to work on marketing a food product or nutrition service, employing market strategies, evaluating consumer needs and trends, testing products, and interacting with the media. Possible sites include food and pharmaceutical companies, public relations firms, and wellness programs.

FONU 427 Supervised Practice: Food Management, Geriatric Nutrition

Management Rotation (25 days): Interns actively participate in all aspects of food-service management, including production, purchasing, service, inventory systems, human resources, safety, and sanitation. Through this experience, interns gain experience in problem solving, quality management, and fiscal management.

Long-Term Care Rotation (5 days): Interns work collaboratively with preceptors to provide nutrition care to the elderly, developmentally disabled, psychiatric, and rehabilitation residents in long-term care facilities. This rotation includes experiences in both clinical nutrition care of residents and management of food-service operations within long-term care facilities.

Monthly Seminars and Activities

Interns broaden their perspective on various areas of dietetics through seminars, group tours, and other activities. Participation in all seminars and related activities is mandatory for all interns. Examples include: participation in the Distinguished Speaker Seminar Series and the Palmer Research Symposium sponsored by the Marcella Niehoff School of Nursing; Illinois Dietetic Association (IDA) Annual Assembly; IDA Lobby Day in Springfield, IL; seminars on sports nutrition, reimbursement and ethical issues in dietetic practice; media training; and an ethnic food tour. Participation in these activities is required. This time is not calculated as part of supervised-practice or didactic hours. An additional fee is added to tuition to cover the costs of seminar participation.

Learning Outcomes

Interns should become competent in the application of theoretical education, adjusting to the reality of existing practice environments, and develop interaction skills with other professionals, workers, and clients. Competent practice is defined not only as the application of knowledge in nutrition, foods, and related areas, but also as the development and use of skill in leadership, communication, and management.