

Department of Nutrition and Health Sciences
Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD)
Assessment Report 2001-02/2002-03

Program Learning Outcomes

The learning objectives for the Department of Nutrition and Health Sciences (NUTR) Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) are based on the Foundation Knowledge and Skills for Didactic Component of Entry Level Dietetics Education Programs as defined by the Accreditation Manual for Dietetics Education Programs revised 4th edition, published by the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education (CADE) 2000.

Program Goal #1 The program will provide the Foundation Knowledge and Skills for Didactic Component for Entry-Level Dietitian Education Programs for admission and success in a dietetic internship program and/or post-baccalaureate program.

Outcome 1.1: DPD course requirements provide and adequately address the 101 Foundation Knowledge and Skills for Didactic component for entry-level dietitian education programs.

Outcome 1.2: The program will have a minimum of 80% success rate over a 5-year period in the placement of first time applicants who apply for admission into a dietetic internship program and/or post-baccalaureate program.

Outcome 1.3: A minimum of 80% of students completing dietetic internships and/or post-baccalaureate programs will indicate that their undergraduate education was excellent or above average when comparing to the academic preparation of their peers.

Outcome 1.4: 100% of dietetic internship directors will indicate that graduates of UNL DPD program were adequately prepared to succeed in their specific dietetic internship program.

Program Goal #2: The program will contribute to the number of professionals working in nutrition and food related careers in Nebraska and beyond its borders.

Outcome 2.1: Of those students who enter the DPD program, 80% will complete the program.

Outcome 2.2: A minimum of 80% of program graduates over a 5-year period will pass the Registration Exam for Dietitians on their first attempt.

Outcome 2.3: Of those graduates seeking employment in nutrition and food related careers upon completion of the Didactic Program in Dietetics requirements, 80% will be successful within 6 months of program completion.

Outcome 2.4: Of those graduates seeking employment in nutrition and food related careers upon completion of the dietetic internship program and/or post-baccalaureate program, 80% will be successful within 6 months of program completion.

Assessment Plan for Program Outcomes

See PDF copy of the *Assessment Plan for Didactic Program in Dietetics*

Assessment results from 2001-02; 2002-03

Program Goal #1 The program will provide the Foundation Knowledge and Skills for Didactic Component for Entry-Level Dietitian Education Programs for admission and success in a dietetic internship program and/or post-baccalaureate program.

Outcome Indicator Results:

- Outcome 1.1: Student course evaluations indicate effective teaching has resulted in students achieving desired learning outcomes.
- Outcome 1.1: A minimum of 80% of senior students indicate on the senior assessment questionnaire that they attained adequate knowledge/skills (Score of 3 or 4) related to identified Foundation Knowledge and Skills.
- Outcome 1.1: A review of course syllabi and content indicate DPD Faculty are adequately address 100% of the Foundation Knowledge and Skills.
- Outcome 1.2: The 2001-2002 and 2002-2003 acceptance rates for students into a dietetic internship program and/or post baccalaureate program was 88% and 93% respectively. This exceeds the minimum 80% acceptance rate.
- Outcome 1.3: 78% of graduates who returned the graduate survey indicate that their perception of their undergraduate education was excellent or above average when compared to their peers. The remaining rated their undergraduate preparation as average with no one indicating below average or poor. Results from the survey when combined with information provided by graduates informally throughout the internship year indicate that in general graduates feel prepared for the demands of their dietetic internship/graduate programs.
- Outcome 1.4: 100% of the directors who responded indicated that UNL graduates were comparably or better prepared than interns from other DPD programs.

Discussion and Improvements:

Feedback was attained related to the student's perceptions of what they have learned in courses from student evaluations. This provides for valuable feedback in assessing student learning outcomes. Several faculty members have developed student learning centered syllabi which facilitate the instructor's and students' ability to evaluate if Foundation Knowledge and Skills have been adequately addressed in the course and the extent of learning.

Foundation Knowledge and Skills with less than 80% attainment were addressed in the following manner:

- Possibly revising NUTR 453 Communication Strategies for the Dietetic Professional to 3 credit hours to allow student to demonstrate interviewing/counseling skills.
- The addition of NUTR 344 Food and Nutrition for Healthy Living to meet health behaviors and education needs.
- NUTR 498 Research Experiences has been restructured to include a discussion component.
- The creation of a sophomore level nutrition course NUTR 250 (slated to be taught Fall 05) to provide students with a stronger scientific background in nutrients which would serve as an

important prerequisite for NUTR 344 and NUTR 455 Advanced Nutrition.

Faculty involvement in the Teaching Circle has led to a better understanding of course content therefore reducing duplication and enhancing progression of learning. Teaching Circle has enhanced dialogue among faculty and encouraged course revisions to enhance student's attainment of Foundation Knowledge and Skills.

Program Goal #2: The program will contribute to the number of professionals working in nutrition and food related careers in Nebraska and beyond its borders.

Outcome Indicator Results:

- Outcome 2.1: Retention rates ranged from 83-87%.
- Outcome 2.2: The RD Exam pass rate for 2001-02 and 2002-03 were 85% and 86% respectively. This exceeds the minimum of 80%. The program will continue to monitor graduate performance on the RD exam.
- Outcome 2.3: We can confidently state that 100% of graduates seeking dietetics related employment are able to obtain employment within 6 months of program completion. Graduates obtaining the RD credential are successfully obtaining employment in the dietetic profession in a variety of areas and a major contributor to RD positions in Nebraska.
- Outcome 2.4: The majority of DPD students who are not matched to a dietetic internship program the first time reapply and are matched the second time and/or attend graduate school following completion of the undergraduate degree. During the past five years, there has been total of 23 students who never pursued the RD credential. Eighteen out of 19 students or 95% working in a nutrition/health-related area (excluding the four 2003 graduates).

Discussion and Improvements:

Retention rates have historically ranged from 83-87%. A survey is sent to any student transferring out of the college. The two most common reasons provided for transferring out of the DPD program are an unwillingness or perceived inability to complete the science requirements or determining that dietetics does not meet their career objectives.