

# NICHOLLS STATE UNIVERSITY



Master of Science  
Clinical Nutrition & Dietetics Leadership  
MSDI

Department of Allied Health Sciences  
College of Sciences and Technology

**Student Handbook**  
2023-2024

## **INTRODUCTION**

The MSDI Program is housed in the Department of Allied Health Sciences. This handbook was compiled to assist students who are interested in applying or has been accepted into the MSDI Program. Careful review of the University Bulletin and this handbook is important to each student. Please feel free to ask the MSDI Director for assistance. Each student should schedule a meeting with the MSDI Director, who will serve as his/her advisor, at least once a semester.

**IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT TO BECOME INFORMED AND TO COMPLY WITH THE UNIVERSITY AND DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.** We trust that your time spent at Nicholls State University will be academically rewarding and personally satisfying to each of you.

The MSDI program is graduate program that includes a minimum of 1000 hours of supervised practice at affiliate healthcare institutions. The MSDI provides a verification statement to the student upon successful completion of the program which qualifies him/her to sit for the National Registration Examination for Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDN) administered by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' Commission on Dietetic Registration. The MSDI program selectively admits 14 students per year utilizing D&D Digital Computer matching process.

### **Nicholls State University MSDI Program**

#### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the MSDI Program is to prepare dietetic interns to function as self-directed, accountable, entry-level registered dietitians (RD) or entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists (RDN). The program seeks to develop graduates who are committed to professional involvement, leadership, and service.

The mission of the MSDI Program is consistent with the missions of the University and the College. Meetings that included dietetics and other allied health faculty with the Department Head were utilized to develop program goals. Consideration is given to input from practice sites, the advisory council, and information received regarding student outcomes. These goals have been established to reflect the mission and the environment in which the program exists. The program goals are as follows:

1. The program will prepare graduates to be competent entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists.
2. The program will prepare graduates who are committed to professional involvement, leadership, and service.

#### **Accreditation Status**

Nicholls State University's MSDI Program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, 120

South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190, Chicago, IL 60606-6995, (312) 899-0040 ext 5400.  
<http://www.eatright.org/ACEND>.

### **Eligibility and Application Requirements**

The MSDI program selectively admits 14 students per year utilizing the DICAS application portal and D&D Digital Computer matching process.

Admission requirements include: completion of a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university. A DPD verification statement or declaration of intent must be presented upon application. Minimum GPA requirement for acceptance is 2.8 overall and completion of the DICAS and the D&D Digital Matching applications. Intern appointments are made in April via the designated computer matching company, *D & D Digital Systems*, Suite 301, 304 Main Street, Ames, IA 50010. Phone # 515-292-0490. Instructions and application for computer matching can be acquired D & D Digital Systems or through any ACEND accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics.

### **Course Currency**

Students accepted into the internship program who have completed their DPD requirements more than five years from internship application date will be counseled on which courses may be required for currency of DPD required courses. This policy is to ensure that interns have current knowledge needed to complete the internship program successfully.

### **Withdrawal from Program**

Students who withdraw from the program forfeit any and all tuition and fees paid to the university. To withdraw from the program the student must notify the program coordinator in writing and following the steps list at  
<https://www.nicholls.edu/financial-aid/policies/dropping-and-resigning-policy/>

### **Disciplinary action/Termination**

The MSDI program follows the policies and procedures set forth in the Nicholls State University [Student Code of Conduct](#).

### **Financial Aid**

Nicholls State University's Office of Financial Aid can assist all students with questions regarding eligibility for financial aid. More information can be found at  
<https://www.nicholls.edu/financial-aid/>

### **Non-discrimination policy**

Nicholls State University adheres to the equal opportunity provisions of federal civil rights laws and regulations that are applicable to this agency. Therefore, no one will be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964); sex (Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972); disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; or age (Age Discrimination Act of 1975) in attaining educational goals and objectives and in the administration of personnel policies and procedures. Anyone with questions regarding this policy may contact Alison Hadaway,

Director of Human Resources and University Compliance Officer at 985-448-4050 / [alison.hadaway@nicholls.edu](mailto:alison.hadaway@nicholls.edu) / P.O. Box 2105, Thibodaux, LA 70310.

### **Protection and Privacy of Intern Information**

All intern information will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the program coordinator's, instructor's, registrar's or department head's office. Only faculty and staff will have access to these files. Nicholls State University follows the policies outlined in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). More information can be found here: <https://www.nicholls.edu/sja/ferpa/>

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the university to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

### **Family Policy Compliance Office**

U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-5901

### **Support Services**

Support services are available for interns including: health services, counseling, testing, and financial aid resources. These can be found at: <https://www.nicholls.edu/services/>

### **Academic Dishonesty Policy**

Academic dishonesty will be dealt with severely. Refer to the [Code of Student Conduct](#). All proven or suspected cases of cheating, plagiarism, purchased papers, borrowed papers, work copied from the Internet, and any other act deemed dishonest will be reported to the Academic Integrity Committee (AIC) of the college in which the course is offered for permanent record keeping and disciplinary action.

It is especially important that students understand how to avoid plagiarism before enrolling in a course. The following resource is available for guidance in this manner. [https://nicholls.libguides.com/citation/plagiarism\\_prevention](https://nicholls.libguides.com/citation/plagiarism_prevention)

Records of academic dishonesty will be maintained in the Office of Academic Affairs. If a student is recorded as a multiple offender (more than one listing in the data file) of the academic honesty policy, the student will be brought before the Academic Affairs Integrity committee for review as per Section 5.13 of the *Code of Student Conduct*.

### **Multiple cheating offenses**

Section Five of the Code of Student Conduct, 'Academic Dishonesty and Disruptive Behavior,' includes a requirement that faculty file a charge complaint statement with their respective dean whenever a student is confronted or disciplined for cheating. The Office of Academic Affairs will maintain these records, and any student confronted and/or disciplined for multiple offenses of academic dishonesty will be brought before the Academic Affairs Integrity Committee for further review and potential sanctions. Please read the Code of Student Conduct for further details regarding this policy."

### **Disability Services**

Student Access Center acts as a liaison between students and faculty to facilitate the provision of accommodations as per Americans with Disabilities Act.

<https://www.nicholls.edu/student-access-center/>

### **Moodle Policy**

Moodle will be used for this course. Recommended minimum browsers for Moodle include Firefox 4, Internet Explorer 8 (IE 10 required for drag and drop of files from outside the browser into Moodle), Safari 5, Google Chrome 11. The best browser suggestion is to use the latest version of your chosen browser. The URL is <http://moodle2.nicholls.edu/moodle>. Enter your Username and Password. Your username is the first part of your Nicholls' email address before the "@" sign. Your password is your N number; you must use a capital N.

### **Continuing Learning Following an Extreme Emergency:**

In order to make continued learning possible following an extreme emergency, faculty and students will be responsible for the items listed below:

*Faculty responsibilities include:*

- Creating a plan for continuing their courses using only Moodle and email
- Continuing their course in whatever way suits the completion of the course best and are encouraged to be creative in the continuation of the course
- Any adjustments or compensations made to a student's progress in special programs with labs, clinical sequences, or the like, should be made only in the immediate semester following the emergency.

*Student responsibilities include:*

- Reading regular emergency notifications on the NSU website;
- Knowing how to use and access Moodle (or university designated electronic delivery system);
- Being familiar with emergency guidelines;
- Evacuating textbooks and other course materials;

- Knowing their Moodle (or designated system) student login and password

## **Health Requirements:**

1. TB skin test (a chest x-ray is required if skin test is positive). The TB test must be updated annually.
2. Hepatitis-B Vaccination (The 3 series vaccine—one month, two months, and six months). The series must be begun and documentation provided to Castle Branch
3. Positive Rubella titer or Rubella Vaccination – A positive rubella titer or the rubella vaccination is required prior to entrance into the first clinical course.
4. Positive Varicella (chickenpox) titer or Varicella vaccination. Immunization compliance for Rubeola, Mumps.
5. A tetanus-Diphtheria booster within the last ten (10) years.
6. COVID Vaccination
7. Physical examination/Medical Clearance. Written physician's release is required to return to any clinical and/or laboratory experience for any event, injury, illness, or other health-related situation that may affect safety in the clinical and/or laboratory experience.
8. Flu Vaccine annually (spring semester)
9. List of prescription maintenance drugs.

Laboratory results and evidence of immunizations must be provided to CastleBranch prior to the start of the internship. CastleBranch will monitor students' evidence of meeting these health requirements. Students who fail to provide the required evidence of health requirements listed above will not be allowed to enter clinicals nor remain enrolled in any clinical course. Failure to renew health requirements that are expired during the semester will prevent the student's participation in clinical activities, which will constitute an unexcused absence.

The department assumes no liability for students with compromised immune systems acquiring other communicable diseases while assigned to specific units and/or patients in clinical learning experiences.

## **Student Responsibility to Inform Regarding a Limitation or Condition**

In the event a student is experiencing any limitation or condition (for example, pregnancy, high blood pressure, epilepsy, diabetes) or is on prescription medication that may impede performance whereby safety is jeopardized, it is the responsibility of the student to disclose this information and/or list of medications to their clinical instructor.

## **Health Insurance**

As dietetic interns may be exposed to a number of communicable diseases while caring for clients in clinical settings, they may be at a higher risk than other University students for contracting a communicable disease. For this reason, the Department of Allied Health Sciences requires all students enrolled in clinical rotations to retain a health/hospitalization insurance policy. Students who have a personal policy through work,

parents or spouses, or by purchase must provide a copy of the valid insurance card to be placed on file in the Department of Allied Health Sciences.

### **Liability (Malpractice) Insurance**

Students enrolled in clinical courses are required to have liability insurance with a minimum of \$1,000,000 per occurrence.

It is recommended that students purchase student liability insurance through the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. More insurance information can be found on the AND Website ([www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)) under member benefits.

Failure to remain current with these requirements will prohibit attendance in the clinical setting for clinical experience. Clinical absences due to expired health and CPR requirements and health insurance coverage will be considered a clinical absence and may jeopardize successful completion of the course.

### **Background Check, Drug Screens, and Immunization Verification**

Interns must complete a background check, drug screen, and immunization verification through CastleBranch prior to beginning supervised practice experiences.

## **ACADEMIC CALENDAR AND FEES**

Students accepted into the MSDI will register as graduate students for Master's Courses (500 level) The program is approximately 12-18 months in length and includes a minimum of 1000 hours of supervised practice. In order to successfully complete the MSDI Program, students must pass all rotation experiences, meet all competency requirements, and earn a 3.0 GPA in all coursework.

Registration and tuition fees\* applicable to the program can also be found in the *NSU Bulletin* located at [www.nicholls.edu](http://www.nicholls.edu)

\*Fees are subject to change

### **Anticipated Course Costs the Intern will be Responsible for:**

<b>Item Description</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>
MSDI Tuition/Fees	\$16,000
Graduate School Application Fee	\$20 (\$30 International)
D&D Digital Matching Fee	\$50
AND Student Membership	\$50/year
Malpractice Insurance	\$50-80
Background Check & Drug Testing	\$50-90

Immunizations	\$50-150
Travel (varies depending on area of residence and facility assignments)	\$50-100 per month
Housing (highly variable on area intern chooses to live in)	\$300+ per month
Parking on Campus	\$50/year
Books, Student Tracking System (Typhon), Pocket Prep Subscription, EHRGo subscription, and eNCPT Subscriptions.	\$200-500
Lab Coat (not required at all locations)	\$30-50
Slip Resistant Shoes/Uniforms	\$50-100 depending on how many purchased
AND FNCE Attendance	\$500-2000 (depends on location and accommodations/travel selected)
LAND ACT Attendance	\$200-400 (varies on accommodations selected)
RD Exam Review Course	\$250 - \$500.

### **Professional Association Membership**

All interns are required to join and maintain student membership in the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics for the duration of their enrollment. Interns will be required to provide proof of membership prior to beginning the internship program.

### **Travel to Rotation Sites**

Students are responsible for their own travel (**must have your own vehicle**) to and from rotation sites. Public transportation is not available. All sites are within of 75 miles of the University. Students will be placed at rotation sites based on the strengths of the site as well as the learning needs of the student. Interns are responsible for their own safety as they travel to and from assigned rotations, classes, and other internship required activities. Interns are responsible to carry adequate automobile liability insurance covering themselves and any other interns they might have in their vehicles. All interns must provide the internship with a copy of their valid driver's license and a copy of their automobile insurance card. The internship program is not liable for the safety of the interns when traveling in their own vehicles or in the vehicle of another intern or a preceptor.

Group travel may be necessary for certain internship required activities. This type of travel may be covered by the internship program (university) and subject to travel policies and procedures of the university and the State of Louisiana.



## **Identification**

Interns will receive a Colonel Card ID at the start of their enrollment in the internship program. This ID must be worn at all times during rotation experiences.

## **Employment Policy**

Students shall not be considered employees of the facilities for any purposes when participating in this internship program, and are not and will not be eligible for any employee benefits, but will be subject to all rules and regulations pertaining to regular employees of the facility.

Facilities may not utilize interns to replace employees. Interns are in the facility to learn but not to be the sole source of labor for a task.

## ***Housing and Meal Tickets***

A housing and food service contract is offered through the Student Life Office and Union Services and Facilities located in the Bollinger Student Union.

The current cost of the Housing and Food Service Plan for the regular semester ranges from \$3,600 to \$5,912. More detailed information can be found at the following link: <https://www.nicholls.edu/housing/comparison-chart/>

Applications for housing and food service contracts may be filed at any time and must be accompanied by a deposit of \$250. Checks or money orders should be made payable to Nicholls State University. This deposit, held until the student is no longer in residence at the University, will be returned provided no damage has been charged to the occupant, the student has met all obligations of the housing and food service contract, and all indebtedness owed by the student has been paid in full. If any indebtedness is owed by the student, the deposit will be used to pay the indebtedness and any remaining balance will be paid to the student. This deposit will be forfeited if the student has not canceled a reservation at least 45 days prior to the announced opening time of residence halls for the applicable contract period.

Students not living in residence hall may purchase a meal ticket at varying costs. More information can be found here:

<https://www.nicholls.edu/dining/meal-plans/commuter-meal-plans/>

## **Dress Code**

All students are expected to follow the dress code. Proper dress asserts a professional image to patients and facility staff. Facilities may have additional requirements that the interns are expected to honor. During conferences, students are expected to dress professionally. During all rotations (unless otherwise instructed by your preceptor), students must wear:

- Red scrub top
- Black scrub pants
- Dark gray or black non-skid shoes
  - Closed-toe and heel, solid leather, soft-soled professional style shoes preferred
  - May be lace up

- No sandals or cloth construction
- Tennis shoes are acceptable as long as they are dark gray or black and are clean
- Proper undergarments are required under uniform
- Plain black lab coat, sweater, or jacket is permitted
  - No brands/logos/insignias (other than Nicholls) allowed
- Hair:
  - No extreme coloring or styling. No dying with bold colors (i.e. blue, pink, green, etc.). Natural shades of color or highlights are permitted.
  - Refer to your rotation preceptor for facility-specific guidelines on styles (i.e. up or down)
  - Barrettes, clips or headbands are acceptable as long as they are neutral in color.
- Jewelry:
  - Earring studs are acceptable. No dangling or hoop earrings permitted. No visible body piercings other than ears are allowed. Ear gouging is discouraged. For students with existing ear plugs, flesh tone hider plugs must be worn. A wedding ring may be worn, and the suggestion is that it be plain without stones.
  - Refer to your preceptor for facility-specific requirements regarding jewelry.
- Fingernails must be kept clean, short, filed and *free from polish* (for foodservice rotations). Artificial nails are not permitted.
- Visible tattoos must be concealed/covered.
- Identification badges should be worn at all times during rotations. Your Nicholls State University school ID will be used as your ID badge (some facilities require their own ID badges and will provide you with one).
- Hair nets shall be worn in food production and serving areas at all times. If the facility does not supply hair nets it is the intern's responsibility to purchase them.
- If facility-specific guidelines should differ from the above, permission for exceptions will be at the discretion of preceptor, Internship Coordinator, and/or clinical instructor.

### **Injury or Illness During Supervised Practice Rotations**

In the event of an injury or illness during a supervised practice rotation, the intern should notify the preceptor immediately. The procedures established by the facility where the injury/illness occurred should be followed. In the event of a major injury, the Nicholls State University MSDI Program Coordinator shall be notified. Interns are required to have their own health insurance coverage. Nicholls State University is not liable for injuries or health incidents that happen during rotations. Each intern will provide the internship with an emergency contact person and number. Time missed due to illness or injury must be rescheduled.

### **Student Academic Grievances**

Students should attempt to resolve academic grievances with the faculty member involved within 60 calendar days of the alleged incident. To obtain a Copy of the Academic Grievance Form go to <https://www.nicholls.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Code-of-Student-Conduct-Handbook.pdf>

### **Student and Preceptor Complaints**

Students with concerns or complaints regarding a preceptor or facility should notify the Program Coordinator promptly in writing. A student should not wait to discuss the matter with the Program Coordinator. The program is committed to providing students with an educational environment that is conducive to learning. The student's concerns will be kept confidential to ensure that the student is not adversely affected by reporting the issue. Likewise, if a preceptor has a complaint or non-compliance issue with a student the Program Coordinator should be promptly notified. Issues with students/preceptors will be addressed promptly and a record of complaints and resolution will be kept on file by the Program Coordinator.

### **Filing a Formal Complaint Against a MSDI Program**

The Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) has established a process for reviewing complaints against accredited programs in order to fulfill its public responsibility for assuring the quality and integrity of the educational programs that it accredits. Any individual, for example, student, faculty, dietetics practitioner and/or member of the public may submit a complaint against any accredited or approved program to ACEND. However, the ACEND board does not intervene on behalf of individuals or act as a court of appeal for individuals in matters of admissions, appointment, promotion or dismissal of faculty or students. It acts only upon a signed allegation that the program may not be in compliance with the accreditation standards or policies. The complaint must be signed by the complainant. Anonymous complaints are not considered. Where a complainant has threatened or filed legal action against the institution involved, ACEND will hold complaints in abeyance pending resolution of the legal issues and the complainant is so advised.

<https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/public-notices-and-announcements/filing-a-complaint-with-acend>

### **Sample Class Schedule**

Graduate students will be required to complete 36 credits of graduate level (500) courses with a minimum grade of C (must maintain a 3.0). Of the 36 credits, 18 will be core leadership courses and 18 will be elective courses. Graduate students not already credentialed as an RD are required to take the supervised practice courses. All courses, except supervised practice courses, are offered online.

### **Semester 1 (summer) - 12 credits**

**DIET 502. Leadership in Clinical Nutrition (3 credits)**

**DIET 511. Nutrition in the Older Adult (3 credits)**  
**DIET 513. Current Topics in Advanced Nutrition(3 credits)**

**Semester 2 (fall) - 12 credits**

**DIET 503. Food Systems Management (3 credits)**  
**DIET 505. Research I (3 credits)**  
**DIET 523. Dietetics Supervised Practice (6 credits)**

**Semester 3 (spring) - 12 credits**

**DIET 504. Public Policy and Advocacy in Dietetics (3 credits)**  
**DIET 510. Advanced Counseling and Education Theories (3 credits)**  
**DIET 523. Dietetics Supervised Practice (6 credits)**

**Sample Supervised Practice Schedule**

Interns will be required to complete rotations in a variety of settings, including community, food service management, and clinical aspects of dietetics. The rotation schedule coincides with the University calendar and all applicable Holidays. The University calendar can be found in the Bulletin. Students will be in rotations Monday-Friday for 32-40 hours each week. Rotations generally follow the schedule below.

Rotation Domain	Rotation	Planned # weeks*	Planned hours of supervised practice*
Community			
	Co-Op Extension	2	80
	WIC/Public Health	1	40
	Bariatrics Clinic	1	40
	Outpatient	1	40
			Total: 200

<b>Foodservice</b>			
	<b>Patient Foodservice I and II</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>80</b>
	<b>School Foodservice</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>40</b>
	<b>Management &amp; Menu Development</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>60</b>
	<b>Theme Meal</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>40</b>
	<b>Procurement, Storage and Distribution</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>40</b>
	<b>Retail and Dining</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>40</b>
			<b>Total: 300</b>
<b>Clinical</b>			
	<b>NCP</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>96</b>
	<b>NCP and Chronic Disease</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>124</b>
	<b>Oncology</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>40</b>
	<b>Renal</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>80</b>

	Moderate Supervision	2	80
	Staff Relief	2	80
			Total: 500
Total Hours Supervised Practice			1000

\*Planned number of weeks and supervised practice hours are subject to change

Note: students must receive passing evaluations from preceptors in all rotations, complete all supervised practice hours, and satisfactorily complete all assignments given by the preceptor or instructor in order to meet program requirements and receive a verification statement of completion from the MSDI Coordinator.

## Rotation Instructions

It is the student's responsibility to contact the preceptor no later than one week prior to the start of the rotation, to arrange the initial meeting time and location. When contacting the preceptor, the MSDI Director should be copied on the email. The intern is expected to determine if any educational materials are needed or if there are specific dress codes to be considered. **Interns shall show up prepared for the rotation. Preparation items include, but are not limited to rotation checklists, note pad and pen, and laptop.**

## Attendance/Punctuality

As stated in the current *University Catalog* ([www.nicholls.edu/bulletin/index](http://www.nicholls.edu/bulletin/index)) "Class attendance is regarded as an obligation as well as a privilege, and all students are expected to be punctual and to attend all classes in which they are enrolled. Failure to do so may jeopardize a student's scholastic standing and may lead to suspension from the university." Students are responsible for adhering to the attendance policy in each of their classes and for knowing the consequences that may result from excessive absences. Absences shall begin to accrue on the first official class day. For students who enroll in the class after the first official day, absences shall begin to accrue on the first class day following enrollment. Tardiness is treated as an absence unless a satisfactory explanation is made to the preceptor. It is the responsibility of each student to make up necessary course work missed.

Interns are required to complete approximately 40 hours per week in their assigned facility and abide by the schedule determined by the preceptor. It is the intern's responsibility to notify the preceptor if he/she is running late or will not be able to keep to the agreed upon schedule. The intern will be expected to make up all missed hours (even hours missed due to illness) at another time. **Under no circumstance should interns be sleeping**

during rotations or at rotation sites. Interns caught sleeping will be sent home and required to make up hours missed.

### Evaluation Procedure

The intern will be evaluated on a rotation basis to determine overall strengths and weaknesses. Evaluations are based on a 3-point Likert scale and are designed to assist preceptors and instructors identify the intern's needs. All evaluations will be completed electronically using the Typhon System. At the end of the semester, evaluations will be averaged and included in the final grade.

When evaluating interns, the preceptor should provide an honest and descriptive account of the intern's work and professional behavior. Evaluations should not be influenced by the intern's personality. Specific examples are helpful and should be included on the evaluation form. All evaluations should be completed in a timely manner. The intern shall be allowed adequate time for improvement. Preceptors are to review the evaluation with the intern.

For online testing, students will be required to use a lock down browser and webcam.

### Evaluation Rating Codes

1. Below target (does not meet competency)
2. On Target (meets competency)
3. Above Target (exceeds expectations)

### Preceptor/Facility Evaluations

Interns will complete an evaluation of the preceptors at the end of each semester. This evaluation will be submitted to the Internship Coordinator. Information for facility and preceptor improvement will be shared with preceptors at the end of the internship year or as needed.

### Supervised Practice Site Selection

Rotation sites/facilities will be selected based on their ability to provide interns with a positive learning environment and experience. Each site must be able to provide the interns with the ability to complete their assigned rotation experiences to demonstrate competency. Primary preceptors must be credentialed and licensed and must have a minimum of one year of professional experience. The program will verify annually that all preceptors meet these requirements. Record will be kept on file for all preceptors for which registration and/or licensure is appropriate.

New preceptors and rotation facilities go through a screening process. A screening form is utilized to determine the preceptor's and the facilities' ability to meet the needs of the dietetic internship program and its interns. Rotation sites are not selected unless they are able to provide supervised practice experience activities meeting competency requirements of the internship. **While interns are allowed to assist in the day to day activities of the facility, they should not be used as replacements for employees.**

Agreements between facilities and the MSDI program will:

- Be signed by administrators with appropriate authority to represent the supervised practice facility
- Outline the rights and responsibilities of both the sponsoring organization and affiliating institutions, organizations and/or agencies.
- An original signed copy will be maintained in the office of the Department of Allied Health Sciences and a copy of the agreement will also be kept in the office of the Program Coordinator. Agreements will be maintained and updated on a two-year cycle or automatic renewal.

### **On-going Curricular Improvement: Retention and Remediation Procedures**

As per the Nicholls State University Graduate School Policy, a graduate student whose graduate cumulative grade-point average, or semester average, falls below 3.0 will be placed on probation. Probationary status is removed at the end of a subsequent semester in which a cumulative and semester grade-point average of 3.0 is attained. A student on probation who fails to earn a minimum, graduate, semester grade-point average of 3.0 will be suspended for one semester, after which the student may re-enroll. A second suspension will be for an indefinite period of time. A student who has served a time of suspension of at least one semester may appeal to the Graduate Council for readmission following the procedure as outlined in the Application of Appeal for Readmission after Second Suspension. A third suspension will result in permanent dismissal from graduate studies. For the purpose of determining graduate student eligibility to return to the University, a semester and summer session are considered to be the same. Suspensions may not be appealed.

The program faculty and preceptors will make every effort to assist all interns that are not meeting the minimum standards through remediation and additional assignments. Interns will be evaluated every rotation to determine if they are satisfactorily meeting the requirements and can continue to the next rotation. A competency rating of less than 4 will trigger the instructor to determine a remediation plan for the intern. A competency rating of less than 3 will require the intern to remediate and repeat the activity necessary to assess attainment of competency.

Interns will also be asked to evaluate their facilities, preceptors, instructors, assigned activities, and assignments. Interns will also be asked to evaluate their level of preparedness during an exit interview. Preceptors will also be asked to evaluate each intern's overall preparedness.

### **Completion Requirements**

All of the following requirements are mandatory for successful completion of the internship program. If they are not completed, a verification statement for eligibility to sit for the registration examination for dietitians will not be issued to the intern.

1. Completion of degree requirements (18 core credit hours, 18 elective credit hours).
2. Completion of 1000 hours of supervised practice experiences (see sample rotation schedule)
3. Completion of the time sheet/rotation logs for each rotation.



4. Completion of all required supervised practice experiences to meet the competencies (must receive a 2 or higher evaluation score on each competency).
5. Completion of all rotation evaluations.
6. Completion of all rotation readiness assignments as assigned by the program coordinator and instructor.
7. Documented attendance at all required conferences, meetings, and workshops.
8. A minimum GPA of 3.0.

### **Verification Statements**

All interns who successfully complete the requirements of the MSDI will receive a verification statement and a verification statement will be submitted to the Commission on Dietetic Registration in order for the interns to be eligible to take the Registration Examination for Registered Dietitians.

### **Policies Regarding the Use of social media**

Due to the significant potential for expanded information sharing and collaboration, Nicholls supports the positive use of social media. Social media provides a rich forum for the sharing of ideas, diverse opinions, and civil debate. It is recognized that the facilitation of communication and networking is potentially beneficial for academic activities, research collaboration and clinically/career-related activities. Individuals engaged in the use of social media should be cognizant that sites such as Facebook tend to be more entertainment-oriented, whereas, a site such as LinkedIn is more oriented to career-networking. To that end, the student is reminded of the permanence and wide accessibility of this form of communication and that civil and legal tenants of appropriate faculty/student behavior apply to this mode of communication. Therefore, individuals using social media reminded of the importance of monitoring the accuracy, tone and content of their personal interactions.

#### **Policy on Constructive Use of Social Media for Students**

Students are individually responsible for their postings. Since the personal social media page provides an opportunity to contribute to the building of a student's professional reputation, it is important for the student to purposefully attempt to illustrate aspects of their responsible, respectful, accountable nature through their associations with others. It is recognized that the facilitation of communication and networking is potentially beneficial for academic activities, as well as, to assist potential supervisors and employers to identify appropriate individuals to serve within their organization. Students should be aware that social media may be used as a screening by employers to avoid hiring individuals who do not portray a public image congruent with the standards of the company or organization. The social media page must be monitored closely, especially for unprofessional material which may reflect negatively on the student that was posted by others. Students should avoid posting or allowing any information on their page which may appear harassing, obscene, threatening, hateful, or embarrassing to anyone else, as well as, words, jokes, or comments of a discriminatory nature with regard to gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, age, or religion. Privacy settings should be used to ensure that only individuals with

authorized access can see a student's information and posting of identification numbers or demographic information should be avoided. Students should monitor photos posted to ensure that they portray the professional image that the student is attempting to develop and restrict tagging of any photos felt to be professionally compromising.

Although students may feel extremely enthusiastic about clinic experiences, posting of identification, reference or photographs of any clinical patients is strictly prohibited in personal social media. These acts are considered a breach of the confidentiality guaranteed to patients through federal legislation as well as the policies and procedures of the actual healthcare/ educational institution.

When disagreeing with a policy of the university, department or even a class, it is important to address the matter in a professional manner and identify your role as a student and the opinion as your own.

Social networking sites should not be accessed during class, work or clinical assignment.

It is recommended that students follow these guidelines when using any social media outlet (e.g. LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter) in order to protect yourself and reduce the likelihood of causing harm to others:

- Students should never post any information, photos or identifiable content about current/past clients/patients in their care.
- Students should not post material that is harassing, obscene, defamatory, libelous, threatening, hateful, or embarrassing to any person or entity.
- Students should not post words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, age, or religion.
- Students should not complain about your work, coworkers, patients or organizational policies.
- Students should not post pictures of themselves in compromising positions (drunk, sexually explicit, inappropriately dressed) this may cause problems for you later in life.

Employers may check social media sites before hiring.

- Students should avoid posting while under the influence (PUI). When people are under the influence of alcohol they may post things that they might otherwise avoid.
- Students should "defriend" anyone who is harassing them or making them uncomfortable. If the student is scared to completely "unfriend" someone they can possibly alter the settings associated with that person to hide their posts.
- Students should become familiar with the privacy settings on their social media accounts to help insure that their information is set at the level of privacy in which they are comfortable.

### **Policy on Constructive Use of Social Media for Faculty**

Faculty is expected to abide by the policies regarding professional behavior while engaging in social media. It is important to remember that faculty communication on social media is a reflection upon the personal image of the individual as well as the university. The social media page must be monitored closely, especially for unprofessional material which may reflect negatively on the faculty member that was posted by others. Faculty members should avoid posting or allowing any information on their page which may appear harassing, obscene, threatening, hateful, or embarrassing to anyone else, as well as, words, jokes, or comments of a discriminatory nature with regard to gender, sexual orientation, race,

ethnicity, age, or religion. Privacy settings should be used to ensure that only individuals with authorized access can view a faculty member's information. Faculty should monitor photos posted to ensure that they portray the professional image that they are attempting to develop and restrict tagging of any photos felt to be professionally compromising. It is important to remember that when disagreeing with a policy of the university or department/program that it is important to address the matter in a professional manner and identify your role as a faculty member and the opinion as your own.

Faculty should consider professional boundaries in making decisions about participation in social media with students. It is important to weigh the responsibilities of appropriate effective professional leadership and mentoring with the casual nature which media of a more entertaining nature such as Facebook and Twitter which lend to personal disclosures which may not be suitable for Faculty: Student relationships.

Social networking sites should not be accessed during class, faculty meetings or clinical activities.

It is recommended that faculty follow these guidelines when using any social media outlet (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn) in order to protect yourself and reduce the likelihood of causing harm to others.

- Faculty and staff should never post any information, photos or identifiable content about current/past clients/patients in their care.
- Faculty and staff should not post material that is harassing, obscene, defamatory, libelous, threatening, hateful, or embarrassing to any person or entity.
- Faculty and staff should not post words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, age, or religion.
- Faculty and staff should not complain about your work, coworkers, patients or organizational policies.
- Faculty and staff should not post pictures of themselves in compromising positions (drunk, sexually explicit, inappropriately dressed) this may cause problems for you later in life. Employers may check social media sites before hiring.
- Faculty and staff should avoid posting while under the influence (PUI). When people are under the influence of alcohol they may post things that they might otherwise avoid.
- Faculty and staff should "defriend" anyone who is harassing them or making them uncomfortable. If the student is scared to completely "unfriend" someone they can possibly alter the settings associated with that person to hide their posts.
- Faculty and staff should become familiar with the privacy settings on their social media accounts to help ensure that their information is set at the level of privacy that they are comfortable with.

**Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (Academy)/  
Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR)  
Code of Ethics  
for the Nutrition and Dietetics Profession  
Effective Date: June 1, 2018**

**Preamble:**

When providing services, the nutrition and dietetics practitioner adheres to the core values of customer focus, integrity, innovation, social responsibility, and diversity. Science-based decisions, derived from the best available research and evidence, are the underpinnings of ethical conduct and practice. This Code applies to nutrition and dietetics practitioners who act in a wide variety of capacities, provides general principles and specific ethical standards for situations frequently encountered in daily practice. The primary goal is the protection of the individuals, groups, organizations, communities, or populations with whom the practitioner works and interacts. The nutrition and dietetics practitioner supports and promotes high standards of professional practice, accepting the obligation to protect clients, the public and the profession; upholds the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (Academy) and its credentialing agency the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) Code of Ethics for the Nutrition and Dietetics Profession; and shall report perceived violations of the Code through established processes. The Academy/CDR Code of Ethics for the Nutrition and Dietetics Profession establishes the principles and ethical standards that underlie the nutrition and dietetics practitioner's roles and conduct. All individuals to whom the Code applies are referred to as "nutrition and dietetics practitioners". By accepting membership in the Academy and/or accepting and maintaining CDR credentials, all nutrition and dietetics practitioners agree to abide by the Code.

**Principles and Standards:**

**1. Competence and professional development in practice (Non-maleficence)**

Nutrition and dietetics practitioners shall:

- a. Practice using an evidence-based approach within areas of competence, continuously develop and enhance expertise, and recognize limitations.
- b. Demonstrate in depth scientific knowledge of food, human nutrition and behavior.
- c. Assess the validity and applicability of scientific evidence without personal bias.
- d. Interpret, apply, participate in and/or generate research to enhance practice, innovation, and discovery.
- e. Make evidence-based practice decisions, taking into account the unique values and circumstances of the patient/client and community, in combination with the practitioner's expertise and judgment.
- f. Recognize and exercise professional judgment within the limits of individual qualifications and collaborate with others, seek counsel, and make referrals as appropriate.
- g. Act in a caring and respectful manner, mindful of individual differences, cultural, and ethnic diversity.

h. Practice within the limits of their scope and collaborate with the inter-professional team.

## 2. Integrity in personal and organizational behaviors and practices (Autonomy)

Nutrition and dietetics practitioners shall:

- a. Disclose any conflicts of interest, including any financial interests in products or services that are recommended. Refrain from accepting gifts or services which potentially influence or which may give the appearance of influencing professional judgment.
- b. Comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including obtaining/maintaining a state license or certification if engaged in practice governed by nutrition and dietetics statutes.
- c. Maintain and appropriately use credentials.
- d. Respect intellectual property rights, including citation and recognition of the ideas and work of others, regardless of the medium (e.g. written, oral, electronic).
- e. Provide accurate and truthful information in all communications.
- f. Report inappropriate behavior or treatment of a patient/client by another nutrition and dietetics practitioner or other professionals.
- g. Document, code, and bill to most accurately reflect the character and extent of delivered services.
- h. Respect the patient/client's autonomy. Safeguard patient/client confidentiality according to current regulations and laws.
- i. Implement appropriate measures to protect personal health information using appropriate techniques (e.g., encryption).

## 3. Professionalism (Beneficence) Nutrition and dietetics practitioners shall:

- a. Participate in and contribute to decisions that affect the well-being of patients/clients.
- b. Respect the values, rights, knowledge, and skills of colleagues and other professionals.
- c. Demonstrate respect, constructive dialogue, civility and professionalism in all communications, including social media.
- d. Refrain from communicating false, fraudulent, deceptive, misleading, disparaging or unfair statements or claims.
- e. Uphold professional boundaries and refrain from romantic relationships with any patients/clients, surrogates, supervisees, or students.
- f. Refrain from verbal/physical/emotional/sexual harassment.
- g. Provide objective evaluations of performance for employees, coworkers, and students and candidates for employment, professional association memberships, awards, or scholarships, making all reasonable efforts to avoid bias in the professional evaluation of others.
- h. Communicate at an appropriate level to promote health literacy.
- i. Contribute to the advancement and competence of others, including colleagues, students, and the public.

4. Social responsibility for local, regional, national, global nutrition and well-being (Justice)  
Nutrition and dietetics practitioners shall:

- a. Collaborate with others to reduce health disparities and protect human rights.
- b. Promote fairness and objectivity with fair and equitable treatment.
- c. Contribute time and expertise to activities that promote respect, integrity, and competence of the profession.
- d. Promote the unique role of nutrition and dietetics practitioners.
- e. Engage in service that benefits the community and to enhance the public's trust in the profession.
- f. Seek leadership opportunities in professional, community, and service organizations to enhance health and nutritional status while protecting the public.

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics/Commission on Dietetics Registration (2018, February). *Code of Ethics for the Nutrition and Dietetics Profession*. Retrieved May 17, 2018, from [www.eatrightpro.org](http://www.eatrightpro.org)

### [Steps to Becoming a Registered Dietitian](#)

NICHOLLS STATE UNIVERSITY  
MSDI PROGRAM  
Verification of Receipt of Program Handbook

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have received a copy of the  
Nicholls State University, MSDI Program Handbook and understand that it  
contains important information regarding the program's policies. I understand  
that it is my obligation to be aware of and abide by the policies contained in this handbook.

I understand that the policies contained in this handbook may occasionally require  
clarification and that I should discuss any questions that arise with the MSDI Program  
Coordinator.

I also understand that updates and additional information regarding the program  
may be made available in the Dietetics Internship section of the University website.

I also understand that I must successfully complete all coursework and supervised  
practice hours to receive a Verification Statement that allows me to take the RD exam.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**This form must be signed and submitted with your Admission Checklist to the  
program coordinator at the beginning of the program.**