



UNIVERSITY OF SAINT JOSEPH

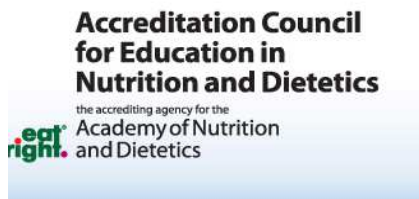
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Student Handbook

Didactic Program in Dietetics

Department of Nutrition and Public Health

The University of Saint Joseph's Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND[®]) of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.



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ACEND[®] is the Academy's accrediting agency for education programs preparing students for a career as a Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDN) or Dietetic Technician, Registered (DTR).

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University of Saint Joseph Website: www.usj.edu

Please visit the online USJ DPD Student Handbook (referred in this document):

<https://www.usj.edu/academics/academic-schools/sihs/nutrition-public-health/nutrition-and-dietetics/nutrition-bs>

I. PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

A. Faculty and Staff in Nutrition and Dietetics

Our offices are located **on the 3rd floor of Lourdes Hall** on the University of Saint Joseph's main campus, 1678 Asylum Avenue, West Hartford, CT 06117.

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B. University History and Core Values

The University of Saint Joseph (USJ) was founded in 1932 by the Sisters of Mercy of Connecticut. Grounded in its heritage as a Catholic institution with a strong focus on professional programs, USJ upholds the value of a liberal arts education and a commitment to community service. Within the small campus environment, students are enabled to thrive in a culture of achievement and collaboration that emphasizes the worth, creativity and uniqueness of each person. Education is viewed as a lifetime process, and University programs provide the basis for continuous intellectual and personal development.

For more information, please visit the USJ website:

- History: <https://www.usj.edu/about-us/usj-history>
- Fast facts: <https://www.usj.edu/about-us/fast-facts>
- Core values: <https://www.usj.edu/about-us/usj-history/mission-core-values>

C. University Mission Statement

The University of Saint Joseph, founded by the Sisters of Mercy in the Catholic tradition, provides a rigorous liberal arts and professional education for a diverse student population in an inclusive environment that encourages strong ethical values, personal integrity, and a sense of responsibility to the needs of society.

D. Department of Nutrition and Public Health Mission Statement

The mission of the Department of Nutrition and Public Health is to provide students with a broad foundation in their chosen area of study that focuses on improving the health and well-being of individuals, communities and populations by addressing the diverse needs of a changing society.

E. Didactic Program in Dietetics Mission Statement

The mission of the University of Saint Joseph Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) is to provide excellence in education in nutrition and dietetics in the context of a liberal arts education that meets the requirements of the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) by preparing students for supervised practice leading to eligibility for the CDR credentialing exam to become a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN).

F. Program Goals, Objectives and Outcomes

Goal #1: To prepare graduates to successfully enter a supervised practice program (e.g. dietetic internship).

- a. At least 80% of program students will complete the program/degree requirements within 6 years (150% of the program length).
- b. 60% of program graduates apply for admission to a supervised practice program prior to or within 12 months of graduation.
- c. 50% of program graduates are admitted to a supervised practice program within 12 months of graduation.
- d. Among the program graduates who apply to supervised practice programs, at least 70% will be admitted within 12 months of graduation.

Goal #2: To prepare graduates with a strong foundation in nutrition/dietetics to perform proficiently in a supervised practice program (e.g. dietetic internship) in preparation to become a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN).

- a. At least 90% of graduates who enter a supervised practice will complete the program.
- b. At least 90% of supervised practice program directors will rate satisfaction with graduates at an average of 3 (or better) on a 5-point scale on each of the following characteristics: Dietetics knowledge, work methods, adaptability, decision making, interpersonal skills, communication, work habits and leadership.
- c. The program's one-year pass rate (graduates who pass the registration exam within one year of first attempt) on the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists is at least 80%.

Information on outcomes will be provided upon request.

G. Program Description

The USJ Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) is a four-year baccalaureate degree program leading to the completion of the academic requirements of the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND®) for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. The courses are designed to meet the core knowledge requirements for entry-level didactic education programs. Completion of the Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree and earning a verification statement qualifies a student to apply for a supervised practice experience.

The DPD is also open to students with a baccalaureate degree in either a major other than Nutrition or to those who need to update their education and wish to meet the Academy's academic requirements. Students with a Bachelor's degree must apply for admission to the University for a second degree. Matriculation into a second degree program allows one to be eligible for financial aid. Students who are only updating their education may not be eligible for matriculation and therefore may not be eligible for financial aid. Students are referred to the USJ Financial Services for more information (<https://www.usj.edu/admissions-financial-aid/tuition-and-financial-aid/>).

The curricula are based on the major specialty areas of dietetic practice, including medical nutrition therapy, food and nutrition, food service and science, community nutrition, education, counseling and research. The Nutrition classes at USJ are small enough that there is significant faculty and student interaction (USJ average faculty to student ratio is 11:1) and enough flexibility to allow for frequent student discussions. All the courses emphasize both written and oral skills, and expect students to not only pass examinations but also write papers and give oral presentations.

Students are required to volunteer in a dietetic/nutrition placement and earn three credits toward their degree (NUTR 499 Coordinating Seminar) during their final (senior) year in the program. Examples of placements include, WIC programs, city health departments, hospital and university food services, USJ Student Health Services, extended care facilities, SNAP-Ed program, bariatric and diabetes centers, USJ's Gengras Center School (special education), USJ's School for Young Children, and many more. Part of the Coordination experience requires students to carry out a project and deliver an oral presentation to the department faculty, preceptors, and, if possible, invited students. This presentation and final project serves as the required comprehensive exam needed for graduation. **These placements DO NOT count toward the required hours of supervised practice required for registration eligibility.**

Currently, after completing the DPD, earning the verification statement, and finishing the over 1200 hours of supervised practice experience, the student is eligible to sit for the registration examination to become a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN). However, **effective January 1, 2024, the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) changed the degree requirement for dietitian registration eligibility from a baccalaureate degree to a graduate degree.** A graduate degree includes a master's degree (e.g. M.S., M.A., M.P.H.), practice doctorate or doctoral degree (e.g., Ph.D., Ed.D, D.Sc.).

H. Program Philosophy

The USJ DPD prepares students to master the Knowledge Requirements for Entry-Level Dietitians (KRDNs) and provides the background for entry into the next phase of professional training, supervised practice. In the USJ academic community, students majoring in Dietetics have the

opportunity to study with other students in health-related majors. This interdisciplinary mingling in the preparatory courses and planned events scheduled outside the classroom allow students to not only learn the subject matter, but also be exposed to others anticipating health-related careers. They may encounter these same students later while in their supervised practice and when they become professionals. This enables students to begin to understand the concept of a health care team.

Crucial to meeting this goal is the development of problem-solving and decision-making skills. Critical thinking is integrated in each of the required courses. Through encouragement to participate in seminars and workshops inside and outside the University, the faculty attempt to stress the importance of continuous professional growth and lifelong learning. Examination is made of the changing market place and the new demands that it will place on dietitians. Guest speakers in the classroom often provide opportunities to confront new challenges. With service as a University theme, many USJ students become involved in community projects. This exposes them to society's needs, and in so doing challenges them to see how they can share in meeting those needs, both as a professional and a person. The skills learned in these projects are often the same skills needed in the Dietetics profession.

Communication and the importance of quantifying data are supported by the University. All students are tested for mastery, and appropriate courses are assigned to strengthen those who have weaknesses in these areas. Within all the DPD courses, students are expected to write and speak competently.

I. Admissions Requirements

All applicants must meet USJ Admission requirements as described in the University catalog. For more information, visit: <https://www.usj.edu/admissions-financial-aid/undergraduate-admissions/>. Once admitted to the University, students can declare a nutrition major and begin the foundational course requirements in natural sciences and nutrition.

Second degree students are those who already have completed a bachelor's degree. Formal application for a second bachelor's degree in dietetics is made to USJ's Office of Admissions. Applications are reviewed by an admissions counselor and then reviewed by the DPD Director. Six credits can be taken before matriculation is required. The following documents must be submitted:

1. Official transcripts from all universities attended.
2. Proof of a baccalaureate degree from an accredited university.
3. A written plan of study developed with the didactic program director.

J. Cost to Students

For the most up-to-date information on tuition and fees, visit: <https://www.usj.edu/admissions/tuition-financial-aid/tuition-fees>

Matriculation costs include the use of the O'Connell Athletic Center and Health Services. Costs are subject to change yearly when the Board of Trustees votes on a new budget.

Additional Costs to Nutrition/Dietetics Students:

- **Lab coat:** Students will need to purchase a white lab coat or jacket (estimated cost: \$50.00 plus tax) to be worn in the foods and food science lab courses and in some of the science courses.
- **Costs associated with experiential learning:** Students are required to complete field experience in nutrition/dietetics during their final (senior) year of the program. This involves working 8-hours weekly throughout one semester (fall or spring) at an off-campus site. This experience is listed as the NUTR 499 Coordinating Seminar course. Students are responsible for any additional costs required by their field site (such as background checks, fingerprinting, drug testing, etc.). Costs typically range from \$50 to \$150. Sites vary on these requirements and it is up to the student to find out what is needed. Students are also responsible for their own transportation costs and parking fees (if required).
- **Professional conferences, meeting and/or webinars:** Students are required to attend. Many are at no cost to the students, but some on-site events may cost up to \$70. The students usually have a choice on which meetings they wish to attend unless the subject of a meeting is highly relevant and class time is allotted to attend the meeting.
- **Membership in professional organizations:** The faculty encourages students to join the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics as associate members. As of 2019-2020, the application fee for associate members is waived and the yearly membership dues are \$58.00. This membership includes a subscription to the *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics* (<https://jandonline.org>). A form for membership is available in the department or online at <https://www.eatrightpro.org>.

K. Courses for the DPD Major

- * Please note, this list does not include the General Education requirements. For more information on the USJ core curriculum, visit: <https://www.usj.edu/academics/areas-of-study/general-education-requirements>

Nutrition Courses: (45 credits)

NUTR 101 Survey of Careers in Nutrition (1 credit)

NUTR 130 Foods (4 credits)

NUTR 220 Fundamentals of Nutrition (3 credits)

NUTR 305 Health Coaching (3 credits)

NUTR 310 Nutrition Counseling and Education (3 credits)

NUTR 311 Food and Nutrition Management I (3 credits)

NUTR 315 Community Nutrition (2 credits)

NUTR 325 Nutrition Through the Lifecycle (2 credits)

NUTR 316 Medical Nutrition Therapy I + Skills Lab (4 credits)

NUTR 330 Food Science (4 credits)

NUTR 335 Nutrition Assessment (3 credits)

NUTR 410 Health Care Issues (1 credit)

NUTR 411 Food and Nutrition Management II (3 credits)
NUTR 416 Medical Nutrition Therapy II (3 credits)
NUTR 418/518 Advanced Nutrition (3 credits)
NUTR 499 Coordinating Seminar (3 credits)

Science Courses: (24 credits)

CHEM 170 Principles of Inorganic & Organic Chemistry (4 credits)
BIOL 110 General Biology (4 credits)
BIOL 241 Essentials of Anatomy and Physiology I (4 credits)
BIOL 242 Essentials of Anatomy and Physiology II (4 credits)
BIOL 301 Microbiology (4 credits)
CHEM 240 Biochemistry of the Human Body (4 credits)

Non-Nutrition Courses: (12 credits)

PSYC 100 Introductory Psychology (3 credits)
ENG 104 The Art of Effective Writing (3 credits)
MATH 110 Elementary Statistics (3 credits)
PUBH 107 Health Informatics (3 credits)

TOTAL: 81 credits

L. Experiential Learning in Nutrition and Dietetics (NUTR 499 Coordinating Seminar)

The NUTR 499 Coordinating Seminar provides fourth year (senior) students with the opportunity to gain experience in the field and implement a project that integrates topics learned throughout the program. Throughout the semester (fall or spring), students spend a total of **120 hours** in a setting of their choice. At the end of the semester, students present their findings orally and in a written paper. Policies on experiential learning are stated on pages [16-21](#).

M. Sample Program Schedules

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Sample* Schedule: Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD)

Year	First Semester	Cr.	Second Semester	Cr.
1	BIOL 110 General Biology	4	CHEM 170 Prin. of Inorganic & Organic Chem.	4
	ENGL 104 The Art of Effective Writing	3	MATH 110 Elementary Statistics	3
	NUTR 101 Survey of Careers in Nutrition	1	NUTR 220 Fundamentals of Nutrition	3
	NUTR 130 Foods	4	PUBH 107 Health Informatics	3
	<i>First Year Seminar</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>First Year Seminar</i>	<i>1</i>
2	CHEM 240 Biochem. of the Human Body	4	BIOL 241 Essentials of Anatomy & Physiol. I	4
	NUTR 315 Community Nutrition	2	BIOL 301 Microbiology	4
	NUTR 325 Nutrition Through the Lifecycle	2	NUTR 330 Food Science	4
	PSYC 100 Introductory Psychology	3	NUTR 335 Nutrition Assessment	3
	<i>Electives</i>	<i>6</i>		
3	BIOL 242 Essentials of Anatomy & Physiol. II	4	NUTR 310 Nutrition Counseling & Education	3
	NUTR 311 Food & Nutrition Management I	3	NUTR 316 Medical Nutrition Therapy I + Lab	4
	NUTR 305 Health Coaching	3	<i>INTD 301 Mercy Integrative Seminary</i>	<i>3</i>
	<i>Electives</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>Electives</i>	<i>6</i>
4	NUTR 416 Medical Nutrition Therapy II	3	NUTR 410 Health Care Issues	1
	NUTR 418 Advanced Nutrition	3	NUTR 411 Food & Nutrition Management II	3
	NUTR 499 Coordinating Seminar	3	<i>Electives</i>	<i>9-12</i>
	<i>Electives</i>	<i>6-9</i>		

* This table serves as an example based on a typical schedule. However, requirements are subject to change and each student's schedule may vary by semester. Responsibility to register for the necessary courses in the proper sequence to meet the requirements of one's academic program rests with the student. Please consult your faculty advisor/catalog for the most up-to-date degree requirements.

* **Please note:** Required courses for the DPD concentration are listed above. *Non-DPD course credits are listed in italics to serve as a general example.* For more information on the USJ core curriculum, visit: <https://www.usj.edu/academics/areas-of-study/general-education-requirements>.

Sample* Schedule: Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD)
Second Degree Student

Year	First Semester	Cr.	Second Semester	Cr.
1	NUTR 101 Survey of Careers in Nutrition	1	CHEM 170 Prin. of Inorganic & Organic Chem.	4
	BIOL 110 General Biology	4	NUTR 220 Fundamentals of Nutrition	3
	NUTR 130 Foods	4	PUBH 107 Health Informatics	3
Summer	Essentials of Anatomy & Physiology I & II	8		
2	CHEM 240 Biochem. of the Human Body	4	NUTR 330 Food Science	4
	NUTR 315 Community Nutrition	2	NUTR 335 Nutrition Assessment	3
	NUTR 325 Nutrition Through the Lifecycle	2	NUTR 316 Medical Nutrition Therapy I + Lab	4
	NUTR 305 Health Coaching	3		
Summer	Microbiology	4		
3	NUTR 311 Food & Nutrition Management I	3	NUTR 310 Nutrition Counseling & Education	3
	NUTR 416 Medical Nutrition Therapy II	4	NUTR 411 Food & Nutrition Management II	3
	NUTR 418 Advanced Nutrition	3	NUTR 410 Health Care Issues	1
			NUTR 499 Coordinating Seminar	3
<p>* This plan assumes English writing, psychology and statistics were taken in the prior degree (9 credits). If these courses have not been taken elsewhere, they will be required to complete the USJ DPD. All courses transferred must be approved by the DPD director.</p> <p>* This table serves as an example based on a typical schedule. However, requirements are subject to change and each student's schedule may vary by semester. Responsibility to register for the necessary courses in the proper sequence to meet the requirements of one's academic program rests with the student. Please consult your faculty advisor/catalog for the most up-to-date degree requirements.</p>				

N. Core Knowledge Requirements for the RDN – ACEND® 2017

Domain 1. Scientific and Evidence Base of Practice: Integration of scientific information and translation of research into practice.

- KRDN 1.1 Demonstrate how to locate, interpret, evaluate and use professional literature to make ethical, evidence-based practice decisions.
- KRDN 1.2 Use current information technologies to locate and apply evidence-based guidelines and protocols.
- KRDN 1.3 Apply critical thinking skills.

Domain 2. Professional Practice Expectations: Beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviors for the professional dietitian nutritionist level of practice.

- KRDN 2.1 Demonstrate effective and professional oral and written communication and documentation.

- KRDN 2.2 Describe the governance of nutrition and dietetics practice, such as the Scope of Nutrition and Dietetics Practice and the Code of Ethics for the Profession of Nutrition and Dietetics; and describe inter-professional relationships in various practice settings.
- KRDN 2.3 Assess the impact of a public policy position on nutrition and dietetics practice.
- KRDN 2.4 Discuss the impact of health care policy and different health care delivery systems on food and nutrition services.
- KRDN 2.5 Identify and describe the work of interprofessional teams and the roles of others with whom the registered dietitian nutritionist collaborates in the delivery of food and nutrition services.
- KRDN 2.6 Demonstrate an understanding of cultural competence/sensitivity.
- KRDN 2.7 Demonstrate identification with the nutrition and dietetics profession through activities such as participation in professional organizations and defending a position on issues impacting the nutrition and dietetics profession.
- KRDN 2.8 Demonstrate an understanding of the importance and expectations of a professional in mentoring and precepting others.

Domain 3. Clinical and Customer Services: Development and delivery of information, products and services to individuals, groups and populations.

- KRDN 3.1 Use the Nutrition Care Process to make decisions, identify nutrition-related problems and determine and evaluate nutrition interventions.
- KRDN 3.2 Develop an educational session or program/educational strategy for a target population.
- KRDN 3.3 Demonstrate counseling and education methods to facilitate behavior change and enhance wellness for diverse individuals and groups.
- KRDN 3.4 Explain the processes involved in delivering quality food and nutrition services.
- KRDN 3.5 Describe basic concepts of nutritional genomics.

Domain 4. Practice Management and Use of Resources: Strategic application of principles of management and systems in the provision of services to individuals and organizations.

- KRDN 4.1 Apply management theories to the development of programs or services.
- KRDN 4.2 Evaluate a budget and interpret financial data.
- KRDN 4.3 Describe the regulation system related to billing and coding, what services are reimbursable by third party payers, and how reimbursement may be obtained.
- KRDN 4.4 Apply the principles of human resource management to different situations.
- KRDN 4.5 Describe safety principles related to food, personnel and consumers
- KRDN 4.6 Analyze data for assessment and evaluate data to be used in decision-making for continuous quality improvement

O. Program Completion Requirements to Receive a Verification Statement

USJ requires a minimum of 120 credits for graduation leading to a Bachelor of Science in Nutrition as outlined in the academic catalog. The Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) requires 81 credits, which includes 45 credits in nutrition, 24 credits in the natural sciences (e.g. biology and chemistry), and 12 credits in other supporting courses (e.g. liberal arts). Students are expected to complete the program within six years (or 12 semesters).

Second degree students must complete their individual plan of study as outlined by the DPD director, and complete requirements determined by the Office of Admissions. Second degree students must earn a minimum of 30 credits at USJ. Students with a prior bachelor's degree who are not seeking a second degree must complete the course requirements as listed by the DPD Director. These are determined on an individual basis at the beginning of each student's program.

Information sessions on how to become a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN) and the process of applying to supervised practice programs (e.g. dietetic internship) are open to any interested students in both the fall and spring semesters. Students are also encouraged to meet individually with the DPD director. Topics of discussion include, but are not limited to: where they are thinking of applying, whom they are thinking of asking for references, what to include in the essay, and intent to complete forms. During the fall information session, the computer matching process through D and D Digital (<https://www.dnddigital.com>), and online application process on Dietetic Internship Central Application Services (DICAS) (<https://portal.dicas.org>) is reviewed.

Declaration of Intent to Complete forms are uploaded to the online supervised practice (e.g. dietetic internship) application website, DICAS. Intent to complete forms list the courses the student still needs to finish before the program is completed and are part of the application to a supervised practice program. These are needed if one is applying before all coursework is complete. The student makes a request online to DICAS and this is forwarded to the DPD director. She will post them on DICAS **after** the student has provided the DPD director with the courses still to be completed.

The deadline for internship applications is mid-February for a September start date and October for a January start date.

Verification statement: This means the student has successfully met the requirements of the USJ Didactic Program. Specifically, the student has earned a Bachelor's degree in Nutrition from the University of Saint Joseph or completed the required courses at USJ, received at least a C in all required Nutrition and science courses and passed the comprehensive examination (completed at the end of NUTR 499 Coordinating Seminar), and met all the student learning outcomes.

The verification statement must be part of the DI application if the student is issued one before February 15th, and if the student will not complete their degree before May, it must be forwarded to the director of the supervised practice program (e.g. dietetic internship) when the student is accepted. This form will be posted to the DICAS online DI application website if the student is eligible to receive it before the February application deadline. Otherwise it will be mailed to the student after requirements are completed.

Each semester the DPD Director will review the records of each student who is eligible to receive a verification statement to confirm that all requirements have been met. This Academy verification form is given to the student after the USJ graduation in Mid-May or late December. It is signed by the DPD Director.

P. Requirements and Process to Become a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist

1. Completion of a bachelor's degree granted by a US regionally accredited college/university (or a foreign equivalent). Please note, **effective January 1, 2024, the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) changed the degree requirement for dietitian registration eligibility from a baccalaureate degree to a graduate degree.** A graduate degree includes a master's degree, practice doctorate or doctoral degree (e.g., Ph.D., Ed.D, or D.Sc.). For more information, visit: <https://www.cdrnet.org/new-graduate-degree-eligibility-requirement-effective-january-1-2024>
2. Completion of an Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND®) accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics.
3. Completion of an ACEND® accredited supervised practice program (e.g. dietetic internship).
4. Upon successful completion of an accredited supervised practice program, a verification form is issued and one can now apply to the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) to sit for the CDR credentialing exam. Passage of this exam means the credential RDN has been earned.
5. To maintain the RDN, 75 continuing education units must be earned every 5 years (professional development portfolio) and a record of this is submitted to CDR.
6. Some states require certification or licensure for practice. This varies by state.

Q. Commission on Dietetic Registration Exam

The application fee to sit for the registration examination is \$200.00. The exam is given throughout the year by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) testing agency, Pearson VUE, Inc. The program director submits registration eligibility forms for students at the end of the program.

For questions about scheduling or paying for the exam, step-by-step instructions are posted on www.pearsonvue.com/CDR . For further assistance, contact Pearson VUE at 1-888-874-7651, 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. Central Time, Monday through Friday. Students are responsible for all application deadlines.

Academy membership dues for active RDNs are \$269.00 per year plus \$70.00 per year for registration maintenance. Additionally, 75 accrued credit hours of approved continuing education must be completed every five years. For more information about AND, visit their website: www.eatright.org.

II. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. Certifying Courses Taken at Other Institutions

Students wishing to use courses taken at other universities and transfer them to USJ must abide by the following criteria:

1. Required non-nutrition courses can be transferred if they have a passing grade and are accepted by the University.
2. Nutrition courses to be transferred must have a grade of C or higher. Students applying for a supervised practice program must earn a minimum of a C in the following sciences or their equivalent: General Biology, Microbiology, Chemistry 170, Biochemistry, Anatomy, and Physiology. A course may be repeated once to raise the grade.
3. A student challenging a USJ Nutrition course must earn a grade of 75 or higher.
4. Any Nutrition course taken more than five years before application will be individually assessed for acceptance. A student may be required to retake a Nutrition course taken more than five years before application.
5. After acceptance into the USJ DPD, all Nutrition courses must be taken at USJ unless there are special circumstances which must be discussed with the DPD Director. Non-Nutrition courses may be taken at other accredited universities with prior approval by the USJ DPD Director and the appropriate transfer forms submitted to the Registrar.
6. Courses and transcripts from non-U.S. schools must be evaluated by World Education Services (www.wes.org) and the evaluation submitted to the DPD Director.

B. Leave of Absence

Students who leave the university must follow the policy on leave of absence in the USJ Catalog: *Matriculated graduate and undergraduate degree-seeking students who officially withdraw and who have not been in attendance for three or more consecutive semesters, excluding summer, must apply for readmission through the appropriate Office of Admissions (1st Floor, Mercy Hall). They must also follow the degree requirements associated with the term of their readmission to the University.* For more information, refer to: **Academic Policies and Procedures → Official University Withdrawal:** http://catalog.usj.edu/content.php?catoid=14&navoid=742#administrative_withdrawal.

Any Nutrition course taken more than five years prior to returning will be individually assessed for meeting program requirements. A student may be required to retake a Nutrition course taken more than five years prior to readmission.

C. Timeframe to Complete Program

The timeframe to complete the program follows USJ policy as stated in the catalog: *Requirements for the degree should be completed within six years from the date of matriculation. The appropriate department chair may grant an extension...* For more information, refer to: **Degree Requirements → Time to Degree:** http://catalog.usj.edu/content.php?catoid=14&navoid=741#Time_to_Degree

D. Grades

Students must earn a **“C” grade or better in all major courses and the sciences** to continue in the sequenced courses of the program. Additionally, they must meet the University academic requirements as listed in the catalog. A course may be **repeated only once** to raise the grade.

It is University policy to give out mid-semester grades to all students in all classes in order to let students know how they are progressing. If a student receives a C or less for a mid-term grade, the Academic Advisement Center is notified as well as the faculty advisor. Students are then contacted to discuss the situation and come up with suggestions as to what may be needed. This often is a referral to the Center for Academic Excellence for tutoring or a referral to the instructor of the course. If the student is failing they may be counseled to drop the course.

If students are seen to have non-academic issues they are encouraged to visit the campus Counseling and Wellness Center.

E. Academic Advising

Each student will be assigned an academic advisor in the Department of Nutrition of Public Health. Each student will meet every semester with the advisor to discuss their academic standing, update course plans, and complete pre-registration forms. It is the student's responsibility to make appointments.

Student files are kept in a locked file cabinet in Lourdes Hall, Room 19T, the Department of Nutrition and Public Health administrative office. Students may review their files if they wish. Students' academic history is available online through MyUSJ to the student and the advisor. It is password protected. This includes transcripts and progress toward degree completion (which requirements have been met vs. those in progress or still to be taken). Students are also able to see their exams.

If at any time the student is concerned about their performance, both in the classroom or in the field, they are encouraged to speak with their instructor or advisor. The Center for Academic Excellence is open to all students. Additionally, tutors are available for specific science courses; most semesters there is a Nutrition tutor for the Nutrition classes. If a student is having personal issues that maybe impacting academic performance, they have access to on campus counseling services (Health Services 860-231-5272; Wellness and Counseling Center 860-231-5530).

If a student is not meeting the continuation requirements (maintaining a C in all nutrition and science courses) then options are discussed with the student. S/he can continue to complete the didactic courses knowing s/he will not receive a verification statement; switch to the other nutrition track, Nutrition and Wellness; or discuss other majors of interest. The student may retake courses once to raise the grade.

F. Awards

Matriculated students are also eligible for various University and professional awards. The recipient will be nominated by nutrition faculty and chosen by the department or, where appropriate, the School of Interdisciplinary Health and Science Dean's office.

A senior student who has achieved outstanding academic success for recognition will be selected for The Sallie Rorer Award for Excellence in Nutrition and Dietetics.

G. Classroom Ethics (individual instructors may modify)

1. Students should be on time for classes.
2. Class attendance is required. Excessive absenteeism is discouraged and each individual instructor may have policies regarding the number of absences allowed. All assignments are to be made up. The student will assume responsibility for missed class work and information covered.
3. Students are encouraged to consult with the instructor of any course when they do not fully understand the material presented. Faculty have posted office hours and are accessible via email. There are tutors with a nutrition background available in the Center for Academic Excellence (CAE). There are tutors available for many of the science courses.
4. Students are encouraged to participate in class discussions. Sharing of experiences will increase enjoyment of classes and facilitate learning. This will also allow the professor to get to know the student.
5. Closed-book examinations are to be taken without the benefit of various aids such as cell phones, discussions, or using fellow students' answers. The Academic Integrity Policy dictates that a student may face various disciplinary alternatives for violating aspects of this policy.

It is the policy of the department to supervise students who are taking examinations. The purpose of this "proctor system" is to ensure that all students have a fair and equal opportunity to succeed.

Students who are found guilty of cheating on an examination will get a zero for the exam, will not pass the course, will risk expulsion from the program, and will be reported to the Academic Integrity officer.

Submitting work from other students, institutions or publications without proper referencing is unacceptable and no (0) credit will be given for the paper. This behavior could also result in receiving no credit for the course and expulsion from the program. **Ideas and phrases that are not the student's own work must be referenced properly.** Please refer to the USJ Academic Integrity policy:

https://my.usj.edu/ics/icsfs/USJ_Academic_Integrity_Policy_.pdf?target=ba6f34fe-ece5-4e25-9cc7-9df36e8bd804.

6. The following policies will apply to student assignments and course standards.
 - a. All written assignments must be done on a computer.
 - b. All assignments must be stapled, clipped, emailed, or posted on Blackboard if instructed.
 - c. Assignments are due on the specified date. Late assignments may be penalized.
 - d. Papers must be neat. Paper torn out of a notebook, crumpled, dog-eared, dirty, blotched or scratched out is not acceptable.
 - e. Assignments should be proofread to avoid misspelling, poor grammar, and incoherent sentences. Such mistakes will lower a grade.
 - f. Written work should reflect clarity of thought and organization. Students should be sure to document what they say and to use the *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics* guidelines for referencing (unless the class instructor requests a different format).
 - g. Each instructor may have additional requirements for assignments.
 - h. Students have access to computers in the USJ Office of Information Technology (OIT), on the lower level of McDonough Hall.

H. Professional Meetings and Membership

Students are encouraged to actively support the activities of the Department of Nutrition and Public Health by participating in activities such as the Nutrition Club, seminars and National Nutrition Month. The Nutrition Club is open to matriculated and non-matriculated students, majors and non-majors, and abides by the rules of USJ's Student Government Association.

Attending professional meetings is an important component of dietetics education. Not only do such programs provide information on the current trends in dietetic practice, but they also provide students with opportunities to interact with professionals working in the field.

Each student is required to attend the equivalent of two professional meetings during their program, (summers included), beginning with students matriculating in Fall 2017 or later. When a student attends a meeting, s/he must briefly describe the content of the conference on a form (provided by the DPD director) and complete a one-page reflection paper, which will be placed in the student's file. Notices of meeting topics and dates are announced in class and posted in the department.

Students are encouraged to join the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Membership applications are available in the department. Only students who are members of the Academy are eligible for scholarships from the Academy and the Connecticut Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (CAND), such as money to attend the CAND meetings.

Membership information is available at: <https://www.eatrightpro.org/membership/membership-types-and-criteria/student-member>.

I. Experiential Learning (NUTR 499 Coordinating Seminar) Policies

1. Site Selection:

The DPD Director must approve both the site placement and supervisor/mentor. Experiential learning sites are selected based on the following criteria:

- Are able to provide meaningful food and nutrition learning experiences,
- have the ability to host and supervise students,
- and are able to tailor the learning opportunities to match the students' knowledge level.

Students' interests are also taken into consideration when they are matched with a site and supervisor/mentor.

The site supervisor/mentor must be qualified to implement their nutrition-related job responsibilities and uphold evidence-based practice. At most sites, they have the RDN credential. In others, they have a food service or education background. Typically they have a bachelor's degree in nutrition or a related discipline (such as nursing, exercise science, social work or education). Supervisors/mentors with the RDN credential are highly encouraged.

2. Additional Costs Outside Course Tuition:

Students are responsible for any costs required by their field site (such as background checks, fingerprinting, drug testing, etc.). These costs typically range from \$50 to \$150. Sites vary on these requirements and it is up to the student to find out what is needed. Students are also responsible for their own transportation costs and parking fees (if required).

3. Affiliation Agreements:

The University maintains formal affiliation agreements with all of our experiential sites. The Department tracks when these agreements need to be updated. Typically, affiliation agreements are for one to five years. If it is a new site, the DPD director will ask for a formal agreement to be executed from USJ's Office of Finance and Strategy. Sites that are part of USJ do not need a written agreement. These include the Gengras Center School, the School for Young Children, the O'Connell Athletic Center, and the SNAP-Ed program.

4. Insurance and Liability Coverage for Students in an Off Campus Setting:

Any injury must be reported immediately to the facility supervisor/mentor and DPD Director. If a student is hurt, their medical insurance would be in effect unless covered by any USJ Student Accident policy. The liability policy covers all students, employees, and volunteers, wherever they are while under the care, control, or custody of USJ through its programs, schools or activity.

If students are driving their own cars, their insurance is primary. In the event there is insufficient liability insurance to cover their negligence, USJ's Non Owned Hired Automobile policy is excess. **USJ DOES NOT COVER ANY PHYSICAL INJURY TO THE STUDENTS.**

5. **Student Volunteer Hours and Schedule:**

Experiential learning must be completed on a volunteer basis. Therefore, students are not permitted to receive payment for their work associated with experiential learning and the NUTR 499 Coordinating Seminar course. Students are expected to meet with their site supervisor and mentor prior to beginning their project(s) to discuss their interests, the needs of the site and their schedule.

Throughout the semester, a total of **120 hours** must be completed and documented. This is typically 8 hours per week for 15 weeks. Students are required to keep track of their hours on a form provided by the DPD director. A mid-semester and end-of-semester form must be completed and signed by both the student and the site supervisor.

6. **Inclement Weather:**

If classes have been cancelled due to inclement weather, the student is not required to attend the practicum experience. For information on University delayed openings and closings, please refer to “Weather-Related Closing Information” on page 22. Regardless of the status of the University, students should use personal judgement and travel only when one feels personally safe. In the event a student will not report to their site, she/he must contact her/his supervisor as soon as possible.

7. **Evaluation and Feedback:**

Throughout the semester, students provide feedback regarding the experiential sites to the course instructor during bi-weekly meetings. The course instructor is available by email or phone to discuss any issues that may arise. Students also complete a post coordination evaluation survey of their site and supervisor/mentor. This information is reviewed by the DPD director and Department faculty at the end of every semester.

At the end of each semester, site supervisors/mentors are given an evaluation form to assess each student’s progress. Characteristics evaluated include: Dietetics knowledge, work methods, adaptability, decision making, interpersonal skills, communication, work habits and leadership.

J. Professional Behavior in a Medical Facility

During experiential learning (NUTR 499 Coordinating Seminar), a student:

- Is responsible for following the policies of practicum facilities.
- Is responsible for reporting on time and following all established regulations during regularly scheduled operating hours of the facility.
- Must contact the practicum facility if they will not attend at their regular agreed-upon time/day.
- If a student is going to a clinical facility, HIPAA training may be required.

With regard to patients/clients, remember to follow patient/client rights and medical ethics, as follows:

- Patient charts or medical records are privileged information. Students may interpret diet information to the patient if under the supervision of a hospital RDN, but relaying any other information should be left to the discretion of the patient's physician. Patient charts and all other patient records should be kept out of reach of unauthorized persons. Patient charts cannot be copied and are not allowed to be taken from the patient's medical unit. **Violations of patient's chart may result in immediate termination from the facility and program** as this is a serious HIPAA violation.
- Do not discuss matters pertaining to patients/clients in public places such as elevators, corridors, or lounge areas.
- Always speak directly to a patient when discussing his/her dietary needs. Conversation, not directly intended to be heard by the patient, should take place away from the patient's hearing
- Each facility may have other patient/client rights, which must be followed, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).
- All contact with patients is done only under the supervision of the designated facility faculty.
- Any information pertaining to the patient's health obtained from patients, patient family members, or from other medical personnel should be shared with the facility faculty.
- Students **are not** to be used to replace employees. Please report this to your faculty supervisor if you feel this is happening.

With regard to the facility, a student must remember:

- Employees are to be treated with respect at all times. If a situation occurs resulting in a misunderstanding, the student should immediately inform their facility instructor.
- Employees are not to be taken advantage of by the student to facilitate completion of assignments.
- Confidential information obtained in a clinical situation must be kept between the student and clinical faculty.
- The personnel rules of the facility should be observed.

Professional dress when in a facility:

- Excessive jewelry is not to be worn; engagement/wedding rings are allowed. A watch and stud earrings are permitted in food production areas. Specific instructions may be given with each assignment. Good grooming is a necessary component to professional appearance and the student must remember to follow Health Department regulations in food production areas.
- Good grooming also means good health and body cleanliness. Visual tattoos must be covered and multiple body piercing must be removed. Hair and body should be odor-free and clothes clean and free of head hair.
- Absolutely no smoking during work time or in the classroom. Gum chewing or other distracting behaviors in the facility or during seminars are not considered to be professional.

K. HIPAA Regulation

If a student is going into a hospital or extended care facility, they may be required to complete HIPAA privacy and security training during orientation.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 established new standards for the confidentiality, security, and transmissibility of health care information. There are three types of standards created by HIPAA: privacy, security, and administrative simplification (e.g., transaction standards). Taken together, these regulations have a major impact on the day-to-day functioning of the nation's hospitals and affect virtually every department of every entity that provides or pays for health care.

L. Technical Standards

Introduction:

Technical standards are all of the nonacademic functional abilities essential for the delivery of safe, effective nutrition care. There exists a high probability that untoward consequences may result for clients who receive care from students/dietitians who fail to demonstrate these abilities.

This statement of technical standards identifies the functional abilities deemed by USJ's Nutrition and Public Health faculty to be essential to the care of patients/clients by students during the course of their baccalaureate and post-baccalaureate education.

The ability to meet the technical standards is a required component for many experiences in the greater community and for acceptance into a supervised practice program.

During a student's course of study, a change in the ability to meet a technical standard needs to be reported to relevant faculty and the Chair of the department. The change will then be reviewed by Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to assess for accommodation.

Students with a physical or mental impairment that interferes with their ability to meet the technical standards of the department for placement must contact SAS as soon as possible to discuss the issue. Similarly, SAS may contact the student if it appears the student has such impairment. SAS will then work with the student to identify the extent of the student's limitations and any reasonable accommodations that may be feasible. Documentation from the student's health care provider may be required.

It is recommended that students seek SAS advisement as soon as possible to determine if a plan can be developed for an acceptable accommodation.

Applicants seeking admission into a supervised practice program and undergraduates who wish to be placed in any off-campus setting who may have questions about the technical standards and appropriate reasonable accommodations are invited to discuss their questions with the Student Accessibility Services Coordinator (860 231 5481, Pope Pius Library – Student Academic & Career Services Center, 2nd Floor). Reasonable accommodation will be directed toward providing an equal educational opportunity for students with disabilities while adhering to the standards of practice for all students.

Student Accessibility Services Coordinator: Jennifer Boylan
Phone: 860-231-5481, Email: jboylan@usj.edu

Description of Standards:

The practice of clinical dietetics requires the following functional abilities, with or without reasonable accommodations:

Visual acuity must be adequate to assess patients and their environments, as well as to implement the nutrition care plans that are developed from such assessments. Examples of relevant activities (nonexclusive):

- Detect changes in skin color or condition.
- Collect data from recording equipment and measurement devices used in patient care such as scales and tape measures.
- Utilize body composition instruments.
- Utilize an electronic medical record.
- Detect a fire in a patient area and initiate emergency action.

Hearing ability must be of sufficient acuity to assess patients and their environments and to implement the nutrition care plans that are developed from such assessments. Examples of relevant activities (nonexclusive):

- Communicate clearly in telephone conversations.
- Communicate effectively with patients and with other members of the health care team.
- Detect sounds related to bodily functions using a stethoscope.

Olfactory ability must be adequate to assess patients and to implement the nutrition care plans that are developed from such assessments. Examples of relevant activities (nonexclusive):

- Detect foul odors of bodily fluids or spoiled foods.
- Detect smoke from burning materials.
- Detect ketones on a client's breath.

Tactile ability must be sufficient to assess patients and to implement the nutrition care plans that are developed from such assessments. Examples of relevant activities (nonexclusive):

- Detect unsafe temperature levels in foods and liquids.

Strength and mobility must be sufficient to:

- Lift supplies and equipment (a minimum of 20 lbs.) if in a food service, community or clinical setting.

Fine motor skills must be sufficient to perform psychomotor skills integral to patient care.

Examples of relevant activities (nonexclusive):

- Accurately measure body weight, height, head circumference, waist and skin folds, and use various body fluids to determine aspects of nutritional status (saliva, urine, blood).
- Accurately place and maintain position of stethoscope for detecting sounds of bodily functions.

Physical endurance and health must be sufficient to complete assigned periods of clinical practice, meaning to have the stamina to complete a full day in a facility, possibly on one's feet for the majority of the day, and to function effectively under stress in acute health care situations.

Ability to speak, comprehend, read, and write English at a level that meets the need for accurate, clear, and effective communication is required.

Professional Compartment is necessary to function effectively under stress, to work as a part of a team and to respond appropriately to supervision, to adapt to changing situations, to respond appropriately to patients and families under stress, and to follow through on assigned patient care responsibilities.

Cognitive ability is necessary to collect, analyze, and integrate information and knowledge to make clinical judgments and management decisions that promote positive client outcomes.

Other Abilities must be sufficient to demonstrate competencies, such as the ability to: arrive to a site on a timely basis, meet the demands for timely performance of duties, and meet the organizational requirements to perform these duties in a professional and competent manner.

M. Sexual Misconduct Policy

Information related to Sexual Misconduct is found on the USJ website:
<https://www.usj.edu/student-life/title-ix/>

N. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Code of Ethics

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Code of Ethics for the Nutrition and Dietetics Profession is stated on the Academy website (Effective Date: June 1, 2018):
<https://www.eatrightpro.org/practice/code-of-ethics/what-is-the-code-of-ethics>

O. Grievances and Complaint Process

Any grievance by student or experiential site supervisor/mentor must first be attempted to be resolved between the individuals. If a resolution cannot be achieved, individuals should go to the course instructor and then, if not resolved, to the DPD Director. If still not resolved, they should consult with the Department Chairman. The School Dean would be contacted if a satisfactory solution cannot be determined. Finally, if no resolution can be achieved, then the Provost will be contacted. To prevent retaliation and protect all parties involved, conversations (both written and verbal) will remain confidential. If still not resolved, the student has access to the USJ Student Appeals Board process.

The **Commission on Dietetic Registration of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics** has a procedure for filing grievances as follows: United States Department of Education regulations mandate accrediting agencies to require accredited programs to provide students with information on how to file complaints with the accrediting agency.

ACEND[®] Procedure for Complaints against 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 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.

To file a complaint with ACEND[®] use the following link:

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

A copy of the accreditation standards and/or ACEND'S policy and procedure for submission of complaints, including the Complaint Investigation Request, may be obtained at:

<https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/public-notices-and-announcements/filing-a-complaint-with-acend/procedure-for-complaints-against-accredited-programs>

ACEND[®] can be contacted by:

- Email: ACEND@eatright.org
- Phone: 800/877-1600, ext. 5400
- Mail: 120 South Riverside Plaza
- Suite 2190, Chicago, IL 60606-6995

P. Academic Calendar and Holiday Observances

For semester start dates, holidays and other important dates please see the academic calendar on the USJ website: <https://www.usj.edu/academics/registrar/academic-calendar/>

Q. Weather Related Closing Information and USJ Emergency Alert System

Information on delayed openings, closings and cancellations due to inclement weather is posted on the USJ website (www.usj.edu). For the most specific status and instructions, listen to the USJ switchboard message (860) 232-4571. Regardless of the status of the University, students should use personal judgment and travel only when one feels personally safe.

USJ has an **Emergency Alert System** that students can use by completing the USJ Alert Emergency Notification Signup at <https://www.usj.edu/student-life/public-safety/stay-informed-emergency-alert-system>. This is a state-of-the-art notification system that is capable of sending text and email notifications instantly and simultaneously to all registered users via mobile phones, wireless PDAs and preferred email accounts. The USJ alert system powered by e2Campus will automatically send notifications critical to safety and well-being, as well as storm-related information, to all USJ email accounts.

Television announcements on delayed openings, cancellations or closings will be made on the following stations; however the University switchboard or the USJ Emergency Alert systems are the best sources for information.

Television Stations:

WVIT Channel 30 (NBC)
WFSB Channel 3 (CBS)
WTIC-FM 96.5

WTNH Channel 8 (My TV 9)
WPLR 99.1
WZMX 93.7

WRCH-FM 100.5
WLAD 800

R. COVID-19 Related Policies and Procedures

1. **USJ Mask and Social Distancing Policy**, click here: <https://www.usj.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/USJ-Fall-2020-Mask-Policy.pdf>
2. **For the latest information on USJ COVID reopen plans**, click here: <https://www.usj.edu/student-life/coronavirus-covid-19/>
3. **Statement on risk of exposure to infectious disease and other personal injuries:**

Students understand that participating in a clinical/practical placement at a healthcare facility or related institution entails certain risks, including the risk of exposure to infectious disease and other personal injuries. This risk is enhanced during the current COVID-19 pandemic. Students understand that those risks are beyond the control of the University. Students freely and voluntarily accept those risks. Students must comply with policies and procedures in place at the clinical/practical site, including those intended to mitigate the spread of infectious diseases, including COVID-19. Sites may require students to provide their own facemasks and personal protective equipment (PPE). Students will be provided training on control of the spread of infectious disease and proper use of PPE prior to participating in clinical/patient care or similar services at a clinical site.

If you have a health condition that may increase your risk of contracting an infectious disease, contact the Office of Accessibility services to begin the process to determine if an accommodation is possible. Jennifer Boylan, Director of Accessibility Services (860-231-5481, jboylan@usj.edu).