

Louisiana State University

School of Nutrition & Food Sciences

**Didactic Program in Dietetics
Student Handbook**

2025-2026

Updated August 2025

Meet the Director

Welcome and thank you for your interest in dietetics and the Accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) at LSU. Dietetics is a vibrant field with unlimited opportunities in food and nutrition.

At LSU, Erin M. McKinley, PhD, RD, LDN, CLC, CHES, FAND, Associate Professor, started as the Director of the DPD in March of 2018. Didactic Programs in Dietetics are one of the educational programs of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics to provide students with the foundational knowledge requirements and learning outcomes that will allow them to enter a supervised practice program (also called a dietetic internship) following graduation. Both the knowledge requirements and a bachelor's degree are needed to enter a dietetic internship. In turn, successful completion of the internship is required before a student can be eligible to sit the CDR exam to become a Registered Dietitian. As of January 1, 2024, one must have a master's degree in addition to the Dietetic Internship to sit for the exam. All students entering the DPD must plan to enter a graduate program after graduating from LSU.

As the DPD Director, Dr. McKinley is responsible for the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) program. She maintains a program that meets all accreditation standards and foundation knowledge and competencies. With the other faculty members in the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences, she also advises dietetic students and teaches undergraduate courses. Dr. McKinley teaches a variety of courses and conducts research on survey instrument development regarding breastfeeding and pregnant mothers.

You can contact her directly by email at emckinley1@lsu.edu (the best way to contact her), or by phone at (225)-578-1631, or you can come by her office at 285 Knapp Hall. Knapp Hall is at the corner of Highland and South Stadium. Stop by any time with questions, concerns, or to chat.

I appreciate your interest in our program and welcome you aboard.

Erin McKinley, PhD, RD, LDN, CLC, MCHES, FAND



Quick Facts—what you need to know right now.

Director: Dr. Erin McKinley is the DPD Director: email: emckinley@lsu.edu. Email is the best mode of contact.

Lindsay Barleycorn (email: lbarleycorn@agcenter.lsu.edu) is the undergraduate coordinator for the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences.

Dr. Georgianna Tuuri (email: gtuuri@agcenter.lsu.edu) is the Director of the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences.

To find the other faculty and more information about the program, go to our website by [clicking this link](#).

Regular advising is essential; it is recommended that you get to know your advisor, so introduce yourself—you do not need to wait for class scheduling. Advisors are assigned by last name—see page 31 for the current list of advisors.

You need to average 15-16 hours a semester to graduate in 4 years.

Instructors have office hours for a reason—use them as often as you need to.

Attend class—the non-nutrition courses are as important as the nutrition classes, and the classes you take at the beginning of the program count as much as the ones at the end of the program.

Please do not ask that pre-requisites be waived...they will not be.

Seek opportunities to distinguish yourself as an engaged student, inside and outside of the classroom.

Join and become actively involved in the Student Nutrition & Dietetics Association.

Research/specific topics/practicum classes are available—why not take advantage of them?

I want to let all students know that the State of Louisiana has a [licensing law for the practice of dietetics](#). At this time, only RDs (RDNs) can obtain a license to practice dietetics in Louisiana. Therefore, students need to refrain from providing nutrition/diet advice to individuals, since students violating this law will be referred to the Licensing Board. In addition, since giving such advice is a violation of Louisiana law, this is a violation of the [Code of Student Conduct](#). If you choose to violate this law, under no circumstances should you identify yourself as being an LSU student, since LSU certainly does not condone this behavior. If you have any questions about this, please get in touch with Dr. McKinley.

Table of Contents

Section 1. Introduction/Foundation

- 1.1 Overview
- 1.2 Mission Statement
- 1.3 Goals of the DPD and the Link to the Mission Statement
- 1.4 Pathway to Becoming a Registered Dietitian (RD)
- 1.5 Licensing Concerns
- 1.6 Accreditation Status
- 1.7 Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) and the 2017 Foundation Knowledge and Competencies
- 1.8 The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
- 1.9 Code of Ethics for the Profession of Dietetics

Section 2. Academic Regulations, Policies, and Procedures at LSU and Within the DPD

- 2.1 Undergraduate Admission into LSU
- 2.2 Undergraduate Admission into the College of Agriculture
- 2.3 Undergraduate Admission into the DPD
- 2.4 Requirements of the DPD
- 2.5 Credit Examinations
- 2.6 Tuition and Fees
- 2.7 Additional Costs of the DPD
- 2.8 The Academic Calendar
- 2.9 Adding or Dropping Courses
- 2.10 DPD retention and remediation procedures when student performance does not meet criteria for progressing in the program.
 - 2.10.1 Disciplinary
 - 2.10.2 Scholastic
- 2.11 Equal Opportunity
- 2.12 Sexual Harassment
- 2.13 Persons with Disabilities
- 2.14 Confidentiality of Student Records
- 2.15 Attendance
- 2.16 Grievances at LSU
 - 2.16.1 Grades
 - 2.16.2 Appeal of Academic Ineligibility to Enroll
 - 2.16.3 Sexual Harassment
- 2.17 Complaints
- 2.18 The Office of the Dean of Students
- 2.19 Policy on Prior Learning
- 2.20 Policy for Utilizing Experiential Learning Sites
- 2.21 Verification Statements
- 2.22 Student Assessment Methods

Section 3. Services Available to Students at LSU

- 3.1 The Student Health Center
- 3.2 Recreational Center and Sports
- 3.3 Office of Disability Services
- 3.4 Academic Counseling
- 3.5 The First Year Experience
- 3.6 The Center for Academic Success
- 3.7 Personal Access Web Services
- 3.8 Agriculture Residential College
- 3.9 Financial Aid
- 3.10 The How, When, and Where Students Obtain Information about LSU

Section 4. Academic Requirements

- 4.1 The Flagship Agenda
- 4.2 Undergraduate Degree Requirements at LSU
- 4.3 Undergraduate Degree Requirements in the College of Agriculture
- 4.4 The Nutritional Sciences Curriculum (Dietetics Concentration)
- 4.5 Meet the Faculty
- 4.6 Faculty Advisors

Section 5. The Process of Becoming a Registered Dietitian (RD)

- 5.1 What is a Registered Dietitian?
- 5.2 What can a Registered Dietitian Do?
- 5.3 How much money will you make as an RD?
- 5.4 How do I get to be a Registered Dietitian?
- 5.5 The Registration Examination
- 5.6 The Commission on Dietetic Registration
- 5.7 Licensure
- 5.8 Continuing Education

Section 6. Special Opportunities for Dietetics Students

- 6.1 The Student Dietetic Association
- 6.2 NFS 3900 Nutrition and Food Science Research
- 6.3 NFS 4027 Practicum in Dietetics
- 6.4 Undergraduate Grants through the College of Agriculture
- 6.5 The Honors Program
- 6.6 Other Opportunities
 - 6.6.1 Chancellor's Future Leaders in Research and LSU Discover
 - 6.6.2 Campus Life
 - 6.6.3 Academic Programs Abroad
 - 6.6.4 Academic Minors

6.6.5 LSU CxC Distinguished Communicator Program

6.6.6 More Opportunities are in the General Catalog

Section 7. Applying for Supervised Practice (Internship) Programs

Section 8. FAQ

Section_1_Introduction/Foundation

1.1 Overview

The Dietetics Student Handbook has been developed to help students in the Nutritional and Food Sciences Curriculum, Dietetics Concentration, to understand more fully the Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) in the College of Agriculture (COA) at the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College (LSU) and the process of becoming a Registered Dietitian. Students should read and become familiar with its content.

1.2 The Mission of the DPD at LSU is to provide a program of excellence that gives students a broad knowledge base combined with specialized skills in human nutrition, food, and food systems management to improve the quality of life for families and individuals in a complex and changing world. The program prepares students for supervised practice leading to eligibility for the CDR credentialing exam to become a registered dietitian nutritionist. The learning environment is structured to promote self-reliance, critical thinking, problem-solving, intellectual curiosity, community involvement, scholarly pursuits, life-long learning, and professional integrity.

The Mission of the DPD is consistent with those of the College of Agriculture and LSU.

1.3 Goals and Objectives of the DPD

The DPD has two goals that were developed in conjunction with the teaching faculty in Nutritional Sciences at a faculty retreat and were refined at subsequent division meetings. The goals of the DPD are consistent with LSU policies on undergraduate education, including, but not limited to, recruitment, retention, and degree requirements.

Goal #1– The learning environment of the DPD is structured to promote self-reliance, critical thinking, problem-solving, intellectual curiosity, community involvement, scholarly pursuits, and life-long learning in its program graduates.

Objectives for Goal #1

Objective 1.1 (ACEND® Required)

At least 80% percent of program students complete program/degree requirements within 6 years (150% of the program length). *Status: 100% (2023, 2024, 2025 rolling average)*

Objective 1.2 (ACEND® Required)

The program's one-year pass rate (graduates who pass the registration exam within one year of the first attempt) on the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists is at least 80%. *Status: 86.9% (2022, 2023, 2024 rolling average)*

Objective 1.3 (ACEND® Required)

50% of program graduates are admitted to a supervised practice program within 12 months of graduation. *Status: 100% (2023, 2024, 2025 rolling average)*

Objective 1.4 (ACEND® Required)

60% of program graduates apply for admission to a supervised practice program before or within 12 months of graduation. *Status: 80.9% (2023, 2024, 2025 rolling average)*

Goal #2 – The DPD will prepare graduates to demonstrate professionalism and professional integrity in the field of dietetics.

Objectives for Goal #2

Objective 2.1 (Program Specific)

One hundred percent of Dietetic Internship Directors surveyed will rate their satisfaction with the required knowledge preparation program graduates receive before entering an internship on average 3.5 or higher (on a 5.0 scale). *Status: 100% (2025)*

Objective 2.2 (Program Specific)

One hundred percent of Dietetic Internship Directors surveyed will rate their satisfaction with the professionalism of program graduates completing an internship on average 3.5 or higher (on a 5.0 scale). *Status: 100% (2025)*

Objective 2.3 (Program Specific)

100% of Dietetic Internship Directors surveyed will rate their satisfaction with the professional integrity of program graduates completing an internship on average 3.5 or higher (on a 5.0 scale). *Status: 100% (2025)*

The program outcomes data for the DPD are available upon request.

Graduate performance: Supervised Practice Application Rate for the program meets ACEND's national benchmarks for monitoring dietetic education programs. For the past five years, acceptance into Supervised Practice Programs has averaged approximately 100%, which is well above the approximate national average of 80% match rate.

Pass rate of first-time test takers on the registration examination: The Pass Rate for graduates taking the registration exam meets ACEND's national benchmarks for monitoring dietetic education programs. The pass rate of the testers within one year of the first attempt is 89.7%. These are well above ACEND's mandated 80%.

1.4 Accreditation Status

The DPD at LSU is accredited by ACEND through 12/31/2027.

ACEND is the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' accrediting agency for education programs preparing students for careers as Registered Dietitians (RD) or dietetic technicians, registered (DTR). ACEND serves the public by establishing and enforcing eligibility requirements and accreditation standards to ensure quality and continued improvement of nutrition and dietetics education programs. Programs meeting those standards are accredited by ACEND. A list of ACEND-approved/accredited programs is available online, and you will see us there! [Click here for the ACEND website.](#)

1.5 ACEND and the 2022 Foundation Knowledge and Competencies

ACEND sets the eligibility requirements, the accreditation standards for didactic programs in dietetics, and the curricula for dietetic education. The complete set of ACEND Accreditation Standards can be found at this link. At this time, the DPD at LSU follows ACEND's 2022 standards (updated in July 2022).

Domain 1: Scientific and Evidence Base of Practice: integration of scientific information and 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: Select and use appropriate 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 nutrition and dietetics practitioner 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

KRDN 2.3: Assess the impact of a public policy position on the nutrition and dietetics profession.

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.

KRDN 2.6: Demonstrate cultural humility, awareness of personal biases, and an understanding of cultural differences as they contribute to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

KRDN 2.7: Describe contributing factors to health inequity in nutrition and dietetics, including structural biases, social inequities, health disparities, and discrimination.

KRDN 2.8: Participate in a nutrition and dietetics professional organization and explain the significant role of the organization.

KRDN 2.9: Defend a position on issues impacting the nutrition and dietetics profession.

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

KRDN 3.1: Use the Nutrition Care Process and clinical workflow elements to assess nutrition parameters, diagnose nutrition-related problems, determine appropriate nutrition interventions, and develop plans to monitor the effectiveness of these 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 for and enhance wellness for diverse individuals and groups.

KRDN 3.4: Practice routine health screening assessments, including measuring blood pressure, and conducting waived point-of-care laboratory testing (such as blood glucose or cholesterol).

KRDN 3.5: Describe basic concepts of nutritional genomics and how they relate to medical nutrition therapy, health, and disease.

KRDN 3.6: Develop nutritionally sound meals, menus, and meal plans that promote health and disease management and meet clients'/patients' needs.

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/fiscal management plan and interpret financial data.

KRDN 4.3: Demonstrate an understanding of 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: Apply safety principles related to food, personnel, and consumers.

KRDN 4.6: Explain the process involved in delivering quality food and nutrition services.

KRDN 4.7: Evaluate data to be used in decision-making for continuous improvement.

Domain 5: Leadership and Career Management: Skills, strengths, knowledge, and experience relevant to leadership potential and professional growth for the nutrition and dietetics practitioner.

KRDN 5.1: Perform self-assessment that includes awareness in terms of learning and leadership styles and cultural orientation, and develop goals for self-improvement.

KRDN 5.2: Identify and articulate one's skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to the position desired and career goals.

KRDN 5.3: Practice how to self-advocate for opportunities in a variety of settings (such as asking for needed support or presenting an elevator pitch).

KRDN 5.4: Practice resolving differences and dealing with conflict.

KRDN 5.5: Promote team involvement and recognize the skills of each team member.

KRDN 5.6: Demonstrate an understanding of the importance and expectations of a professional in mentoring and precepting others.

The program's curriculum must provide learning activities to attain the breadth and depth of the required curriculum components and core knowledge. Syllabi for courses taught within the academic unit must include these learning activities with the associated KRDNs.

1. Learning activities must prepare students for professional practice with patients/clients with various conditions, including, but not limited to, overweight and obesity; endocrine disorders; cancer; malnutrition and cardiovascular, gastrointestinal, and renal diseases.
2. Learning activities must prepare students to implement the Nutrition Care Process with various populations and diverse cultures, including infants, children, adolescents, adults, pregnant/lactating females, and older adults.
3. Learning activities must use a variety of educational approaches necessary for the delivery of curriculum content, to meet learner needs, and to facilitate learning objectives.

1.6 The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is the world's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is committed to improving the nation's health and advancing the profession of dietetics through research, education, and advocacy. [Click here for the Academy website.](#)

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The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' mission is "Leading the future of dietetics," and its vision is that "AND members are the most valued source of food and nutrition services." Approximately 75 percent of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' 68,000 members are RDs, and four percent are dietetic technicians, registered DTRs. Other members include consultants, educators, researchers, and students. Half of all Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics members hold advanced academic degrees.

Members of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics represent a wide range of practice areas and interests, including public health; sports nutrition; medical nutrition therapy; diet counseling, cholesterol reduction, diabetes, heart, and kidney disease; vegetarianism; foodservice management; hospitals; restaurants; long-term care facilities; education systems; education of other health-care professionals; and scientific research. As an Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics member, you are automatically a member of your state affiliate—in this case, the Welcome to the Louisiana Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (LAND). Click here for the LAND website.

You will be joining the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, as most of our courses require student membership. Membership provides access to the Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, full access to the Evidence Analysis Library, the Nutrition Care Process, and many other members-only benefits through the website.

As a member of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, you are also eligible to join, for a modest fee, one or more of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' Dietetic Practice Groups (DPG). Practice groups are selected based on your interests; for example, the DPD director is a member of the Nutrition and Dietetic Educators and Preceptors (NDEP) Practice Group and the Research Practice Group because they fit her practice field. Students may be more interested in one or more of the others, such as: Sports, Cardiovascular and Wellness Nutrition DPG, or the Vegetarian DPG. There are more than twenty-five of these that will match most interests in dietetics practice, but you need to be an Academy member to join! Diverse groups offer different services, but newsletters, listservs, continuing education, and networking opportunities are common.

1.7 *The Code of Ethics for the Profession of Dietetics* was updated on June 1, 2018, and is available on the Academy's website. [Click here to download a PDF of the Code.](#)

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and its Commission on Dietetic Registration have adopted a voluntary, enforceable code of ethics. This code, called the Code of Ethics for the Profession of Dietetics, urges all members—registered dietitians and dietetic technicians, registered—to uphold ethical principles. The enforcement process for the Code of Ethics creates a fair system to address complaints about members and credentialed practitioners from peers or the public. The House of Delegates adopted the first code of ethics in October 1982, with enforcement beginning in 1985. The code applies only to members of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. A second code was adopted by the House of Delegates in October 1987, extending to all members and the credentialed practitioners of the Commission on Dietetic Registration. The House of Delegates adopted a third revision on October 18, 1998, and has been in effect since June 1, 1999, for all members and credentialed practitioners of the Commission on Dietetic Registration.

The Ethics Committee is responsible for reviewing, promoting, and enforcing the Code. The Committee also educates members, credentialed practitioners, students, and the public about the ethical principles contained in the Code. Support of the Code of Ethics by members and credentialed practitioners is vital to guiding the profession's actions and strengthening its credibility.

Section_2. Academic Regulations, Policies, and Procedures at LSU and Within the DPD

2.1 Undergraduate Admission into LSU

As the Flagship University in the State, the admission policies are rigorous. [Click here for the Undergraduate Admissions website](#). Undergraduate admission policies, including transfer student admission policies, and student aid are provided in the General Catalog ([click here for the 2024-2025 General Catalog](#)).

2.2 Undergraduate Admission into the College of Agriculture

The Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) is housed within the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences, which is part of the COA. First-year students who declare a major in Nutrition and Food Sciences with a Dietetics concentration and meet the university's admission standards will be directly admitted to the College of Agriculture and can begin taking courses in Nutritional Sciences immediately.

Students who do not enter the COA as first-year students can transfer into the college while at LSU if they have earned at least 30 hours with a 2.00 GPA (or 2.20 for education certification programs) on all LSU and college coursework. Additionally, students must have a grade of "C" or higher in MATH 1021 or above, and in ENGL 1001 (or 1004 for international students).

Students from other institutions must also meet the university's transfer admission requirements. In exceptional cases, probationary admission may be granted upon the recommendation of the appropriate department head and the college dean.

Students interested in becoming Registered Dietitians are encouraged to enter the COA as early as possible to graduate on time. [Click here for the College of Agriculture website](#).

2.3 Undergraduate Admission into the DPD

There are no formal admission requirements to enter the DPD. Any student in the College of Agriculture, the Center for the Freshman Year (UCFY), or the Center for Advising and Counseling (UCAC) with a declared major in Nutritional Sciences or Pre-Agriculture is automatically eligible for our program and our courses. Transfer students from LSU or other institutions who are eligible to come into the COA can also come directly into the major. [Click here for the UCFY Website](#). [Click here for the UCAC website](#).

2.4 Requirements of the DPD

The curriculum for Nutritional Sciences Dietetics is a science-based curriculum that meets the Foundation Knowledge and Competencies promulgated by ACEND. The complete curriculum list for dietetics concentration is in Section 4.4 of this manual.

Students must complete the required 120 hours of course credit to receive the bachelor's degree. All DPD course requirements listed must also be completed to receive a verification statement.

In addition to university requirements, the College of Agriculture has these additional scholastic requirements:

- Students must complete at least one general education English composition course and one general education analytical reasoning course with a “C” or better within the first 30 hours of study.
- Students who fail to earn a 2.00 average in each of two consecutive semesters (or one semester and a summer term) and whose LSU or overall grade point average is below 2.00 will be declared ineligible to continue in the COA for one regular semester.
- Seniors who have completed the first semester of the senior year, are degree candidates, and are under scholastic suspension from the University may be placed on probation for one additional semester at the discretion of the Dean of the COA.

The DPD in the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences requires students to earn at least a C- in all Nutrition and Food Sciences courses, as well as a C- or higher in BIOL 2083 (Biochemistry) and BIOL 2160 (Human Physiology) to graduate. These grade standards align with those of other programs in the College of Agriculture and have been approved by the Faculty Senate Admissions, Standards, and Honors Committee and the Faculty Senate Courses and Curriculum Committee.

Although there is no deadline for completing the DPD or earning an undergraduate degree at LSU, the curriculum is designed to enable students to graduate within four years, and students are encouraged to do so. Various support systems are in place to help students finish the program on time.

The Comprehensive Academic Tracking System (CATS), part of LSU’s academic monitoring system, offers students an assessment of their progress toward degree requirements. There is a recommended plan for the first five semesters of each major, including Dietetics. This plan is the best route to finish the degree in four years. Each recommended plan includes critical requirements, such as specific courses or performance standards set by each department as mandatory for progressing in that major; these are the requirements students must meet to show minimum academic progress (on track) in their chosen field. CATS helps students stay on schedule with their curriculum and graduate on time.

2.5 Tuition and Fees

Undergraduate tuition and fees (note the most recently available are for 2024-25) are available online through the Office of Budget and Planning and are subject to change. [Click here for the tuition and fees webpage.](#) Tuition and fees vary depending on the number of hours a student is enrolled in and whether the student is a Louisiana resident or non-resident. Tuition and fees also vary by year. Required fees are available through the general catalog and vary depending on whether the student is full- or part-time.

2.5.1 Refund of Tuition

- A refund of fees will be made based on the official withdrawal of the student.
- No refunds will be made to anyone who owes the university. Student-initiated resignations will not be completed until all outstanding debts to the university are paid.
- Reductions and increases in fees resulting from student schedule changes will be refunded according to the schedule below.
- All full-time students who become part-time students after the last day to receive a refund will continue to be eligible for all student activity privileges.

- Title IV program fund recipients resigning from the university without completing at least 60 percent of the enrollment period will be required to return all or part of the aid they received to the appropriate programs in the following order: Unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loans, Perkins Loans, Graduate PLUS Loans. Specific information regarding this refund schedule is available at www.lsu.edu/financialaid.

Refund Schedule

Please see the Refund Schedule in the Academic/Registration Calendar section.

Friday before the first class day, 4:30 p.m.	100%
The first three class days	50%
After the third class day	No refund

2.5.2 Refund of Fees

- Refunds of the university fee, nonresident fee, student health service fee, academic excellence fee, operational fee, and student technology fee will be made based on the official withdrawal of the student. Refer to the chart below for the refund schedule. ("Days of classes" are days on which regular classes are held.)
- No refunds will be processed for at least six weeks after registration.
- No refunds will be made to anyone who owes the university. Student-initiated resignations will not be completed until all outstanding debts to the university are paid.
- Field service and transportation fees will be refunded on an individual basis upon recommendation of the department concerned.
- Reductions and increases in fees resulting from student schedule changes will be refunded or charged following the schedule below.
- All full-time students who become part-time students after the last day to receive a refund will continue to be eligible for all student activity privileges.
- Students in good standing at the university, registered in any semester or summer term, who volunteer for military service before the day mid-semester examinations begin, will have the university fee, nonresident fee, student technology fee, and student health service fee refunded. Students in good standing at the university, registered in any semester or summer term, who volunteer for military service after mid-semester examinations begin, will be refunded 50 percent of the university fee, nonresident fee, academic excellence fee, operational fee, student technology fee, and student health service fee.
- Students registered in any semester or summer term, who are called to active duty in the armed forces through the last class day of the semester or summer term, will have 100 percent of the university fee, nonresident fee, academic excellence fee, operational fee, student technology fee, and student health service fee refunded.

1.6 Credit Examinations

LSU provides several opportunities for students to receive credit for previous coursework or previous knowledge. The DPD does not accept previous experience or knowledge for coursework.

2.7 Additional Costs of the DPD

As with all programs at LSU, textbook costs for students can be substantial. Although faculty efforts aim to limit book purchases to essential ones and to reuse textbooks across multiple classes, it is estimated that students spend over \$500 annually on books. The higher amount reflects expenses incurred during their senior year.

The faculty requires students in all three Nutrition concentrations, excluding NFS 1110, to join the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. This membership provides many benefits, such as access to articles in the Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, full access to the Evidence Analysis Library, and the Nutrition Care Process Section of the Academy's website. When accessing the Nutrition Care Process Section, you will notice that it is restricted to members, as are the online Journal and most of the Evidence Analysis Library. Full access to these resources is essential because the program emphasizes the science-based nature of dietetics. At \$58 per year, student membership in the Academy offers significant benefits at a reasonable cost.

The only additional expenses for the program are a lab coat and hair protection required in the food preparation classes NFS 1014 (Food Theory and Skills) and NFS 3119 (Fundamentals of Quantity Food Production), and a basic, non-programmable calculator. These costs are minimal—around \$30.00. Currently, there are no laboratory fees for any other nutrition courses.

2.8 Academic Calendar

The University Registrar establishes the Academic Calendar, which is available online. All observed holidays, planned school breaks or closures, and concentrated study periods are listed through the summer of 2025. [Click here to access the current academic calendar.](#)

2.9 Other rules and regulations are available online; this includes but is not limited to information on dropping and adding courses, final exams, maximum credit loads, grading systems, grade appeals, and university scholastic requirements. [Click here to view the current academic regulations.](#)

2.10 DPD retention and remediation procedures when student performance does not meet the criteria for progressing in the program.

Policies for disciplinary and termination procedures are consistent with those of LSU. Since there is no formal admittance into the DPD, termination procedures refer to termination from LSU, not specifically from the DPD. Issues here are either disciplinary or scholastic. Disciplinary matters are discussed first.

2.10.1 Disciplinary: The Office of Student Advocacy and Accountability website provides information for students and faculty that outlines the procedures for violations of the Code of Student Conduct. [Click here to access the Code of Conduct online.](#) The Office of Student Advocacy and Accountability also explains what constitutes student misconduct. [Click here for the Student Advocacy and Accountability website.](#)

2.10.2 Scholastic: The scholastic requirements to remain in good standing at the University are provided in the General Catalog. These apply to all students except those enrolled as extensions, LSU25+, or “visiting” students.

Students will be advised on other academic options available within the School of Nutrition and Food Science if they feel unable to continue in the Dietetics concentration due to poor performance or a change of heart regarding the curriculum.

The DPD faculty strongly believes that early and ongoing discussions about our campus-wide, College, and SNFS expectations for student conduct and academic performance will lead to few, if any, students facing disciplinary or termination procedures. Prevention starts with providing information. All department syllabi include policies on academic misconduct. Advisors review student grades each semester and offer appropriate guidance. Opportunities for remediation are provided when needed. Students may be asked to meet regularly with their advisor or course instructor until issues are resolved. If all measures fail, the DPD follows the policies for withdrawal outlined in the General Catalog.

2.11 Equal Opportunity

The DPD follows the LSU's policy on equal opportunity as stated in Policy-Statement 01. In brief, PS-01 is in place "To assure equal opportunity for all qualified persons in admission to, participation in, or employment in the programs and activities which the University operates without regard to race, creed, color, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, sex, national origin, age, mental or physical disability, or veteran's status."

2.12 The DPD does not tolerate *sexual harassment*, and the DPD strictly adheres to all policies at LSU outlined in Policy Statement 95. If you experience sexual harassment, your first action is to notify the administrator of the department where the individual is employed. For example, if you believe you have a problem associated with sexual harassment with a member of the Nutritional and Food Sciences faculty or Staff, you would contact Dr. Allen Rutherford, email: drutherford@agcenter.lsu.edu, the Associate Dean of the College of Agriculture.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a comprehensive federal law that prohibits discrimination based on gender for students and employees of educational institutions that receive federal financial assistance. In accordance with Title IX and other applicable laws, Louisiana State University is dedicated to providing a learning, working, and living environment that fosters integrity, civility, and mutual respect in an environment free of discrimination based on sex and sexual misconduct. This includes sex discrimination, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and retaliation. LSU prohibits sex discrimination and sexual misconduct. This policy applies to all individuals regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. Derrick Lathan serves as the Campus Deputy Title IX Coordinator and LSU contact (derrick.lathan@lsu.edu). Any student or employee who believes they have experienced discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, or any other violation of this policy has the right to report the conduct to the Campus Title IX Coordinator or any other responsible party. Click here for the LSU Office of Title IX website.

Any responsible person who receives actual notice of a complaint under this policy shall promptly notify the Campus Title IX Coordinator, who is responsible for informing the LSU Title IX Coordinator and any campus administrators involved in the resolution process. Notice of a complaint may or may not originate from a formal complaint. Any supervisor or other responsible party who witnesses or receives a report or complaint shall notify the Campus Title IX Coordinator.

If you need support services or evidence collected after hours or on the weekend, please get in touch with STAR (Sexual Trauma Awareness and Response) at 225-383-RAPE, The Phone at 225-924-LSU1, or your local police department.

2.13 The DPD adheres to all LSU *Policies for Persons with Disabilities*, Policy Statement 26. This policy provides equal opportunity for all qualified persons without regard to disability in the recruitment of, admission to, participation in, treatment in, or employment in the programs and activities operated and sponsored by the University under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and other related federal and state laws. The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is physically located on campus in Johnston Hall and is a unit within the Office of the Dean of Students. [Click here for the ODS website.](#) Services available and documentation that students must provide to the ODS are provided for a wide range of conditions, including learning disabilities, attention disorders, and physical and psychological disabilities. Programs available for students with disabilities and specific arrangements made for students depend on the exact nature of the disability. Note: Students with special needs must be registered with the Office of Disability Services and notify the course instructor as soon as possible to be eligible for any accommodation in the classroom.

2.14 Confidentiality of Student Records

The DPD follows the policies on accessing student records outlined on the Office of the University Registrar's homepage, under the online FERPA link. This link explains how a student can examine their record and what information can or cannot be viewed. Usually, the DPD pertains to letters of recommendation written for students by faculty members, for whom the student has waived the right to access.

At LSU, efforts are made to safeguard student privacy. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) guides LSU's policies on student privacy: Policy Statement-30, Student Privacy Rights, details LSU policies (Effective date 11/1/96). In summary, PS-30 covers access to education records by students and parents of dependent students, how parents of dependent students can access documents, the scope of student rights, procedures for challenging records, release of education records lawfully without the student's permission, release with the student's permission, faculty responsibilities regarding the privacy of students' grades, and final authority for interpreting this policy.

Policy Statement 06.15 (Use of Electronic Mail) specifies the University's policy on email, clearly stating that student records and related information are private. Faculty members have been informed via a broadcast email that they should not send student records via email unless the files are encrypted.

Policy Statement-113 (Social Security Number Policy) (Effective 7/13/06) further reinforces the privacy of student information. This policy eliminated the use of social security numbers as the primary identifier for all individuals associated with the university, including students. All students are assigned an LSU identification number (LSUID), which is different from their SSN or other demographic data. The LSUID is assigned as early as possible after the student's initial contact with the university. Grades and other personal information will not be publicly posted or displayed in a way that reveals either the LSUID or SSN. Any data transmitted containing SSNs by LSU personnel via any communication network, including email, must be encrypted.

LSU is also subject to the Louisiana Database Security Breach Notification Law, which requires LSU to notify individuals if their data has been compromised, including in cases of stolen laptops.

2.15 Attendance

LSU's attendance policy states that "Students should observe any special attendance regulations set by their college, school, division, or instructor. The instructor may report a student's absences, and the student could be placed on attendance probation by their dean. A student may be dropped from the college for violating the terms of such probation. Absences due to illness or other circumstances beyond a student's control will be excused if the instructor is convinced the reason is valid. The University's Policy Statement 22 covers approved trips, activities, and other approved excused absences. Instructors will excuse any student unable to attend or participate in class or exams on a religious holiday supported by their religious beliefs. It is the student's responsibility to anticipate such conflicts and discuss them with the faculty member in advance.

2.16 Grievances at LSU

All grievances arising from issues at LSU will be managed via LSU's policies and procedures. These will vary based on the grievance. Student appeals are discussed in Policy Statement 48. Students may file grievances on a wide range of alleged injustices; specific appeal procedures for common problems that relate to students are found below. Many student grievances, other than grade appeals, are managed through the Office of the Dean of Students. [Click here for the Dean of Students webpage.](#)

Note: All policy statements can be viewed online. [Click here for the University Policies webpage.](#)

2.16.1 Grades The procedure for grade appeals is detailed in the General Catalog. Students must initiate appeals of final grades by submitting a written request or by meeting with the faculty member who assigned the grade within thirty calendar days after the first day of classes in the next regular semester. Within the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences, if the issue cannot be resolved with the faculty member or if the faculty member is unavailable, the student should then contact the Director of the School, Dr. Georgianna Tuuri, at gtuuri@agcenter.lsu.edu. If she is unavailable or the issue remains unresolved, the student should proceed to Dr. Allen Rutherford, the Associate Dean of the College of Agriculture, at drutherford@agcenter.lsu.edu. Grade changes, if justified, are made using a "Grade Correction Report," which must be signed by the instructor, the Department Head, and the Dean of the College of Agriculture.

2.16.2 Appeal of Academic Ineligibility to Enroll

An undergraduate student who has been dropped from the University because of scholastic deficiency may appeal the ineligibility based on extenuating circumstances. Such appeals must be submitted to the student's dean at least seven calendar days before the beginning of the semester/summer term in which the students wish to enroll. The appeal should be in the form of a letter to the dean, accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstances.

A college committee established for that purpose may be reviewed by the dean or, at the option of the dean, by appeals. In the first case, the committee will make a recommendation to the dean. The final authority in the college rests with the dean. If the appeal is approved:

- The student is eligible to enroll at LSU on academic probation for the next semester/term.
- The Dean may set conditions based on the student's situation, which may include specific academic requirements the student must meet. The student will be informed of any conditions in writing, and
- The student's transcript will carry a notation that the student was dropped but reinstated, based on appeal.

If the dean denies the appeal, the student may submit it to the Office of Academic Affairs for review, along with a statement explaining why the Office of Academic Affairs should consider the appeal. Final authority rests with the executive vice chancellor and provost.

2.16.3 Sexual Harassment The university has reaffirmed and emphasized its commitment to provide an educational and work environment free from sexual harassment and to provide a means to remedy sexual harassment that students may have experienced. The DPD is also committed to this principle. LSU Policy Statement 95 provides guidance and specific procedures on this grave matter. LSU's Title IX Coordinator is responsible for administering this policy at all University locations. LSU's overall policies on sexual harassment are found in Policy Statement 73.

2.17 Complaints

About the DPD

Students in the DPD with complaints about specific issues related to the program (excluding grade disputes or appeals within a DPD class, as those are covered under University policies) should first submit a written complaint to the DPD Director. Suppose the student and the DPD Director cannot resolve the issue. In that case, the complaint will then be forwarded to the Interim Director of the Nutrition and Food Sciences Program, Dr. Allen Rutherford, for resolution. A complaint against the DPD Director must first be made to the Director of the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences, Dr. Georgianna Tuuri, at gtuuri@agcenter.lsu.edu. If she is unavailable or unable to resolve the matter, the student should contact Dr. Rutherford, the Associate Dean of the College of Agriculture, at drutherford@agcenter.lsu.edu. All grievances against faculty and the DPD Director should initially be addressed within the department or college. Students are advised to consult the SNFS Interim Director or LSU SAA before approaching LSU HRM with complaints. Any non-academic (non-DPD-related) grievances can be submitted using the online form available on the LSU Office of Student Advocacy & Accountability website.

ACEND

The Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND), previously known as the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education (CADE), will review complaints that specifically concern a program's compliance with current accreditation standards. ACEND focuses on maintaining quality and promoting ongoing improvement in dietetics education programs but does not intervene on behalf of individuals or serve as a court of appeal for matters related to admission, appointment, promotion, or dismissal of faculty, staff, or interns.

A copy of the accreditation standards and/or ACEND's policy and procedures for submitting complaints can be obtained by contacting the Education and Accreditation staff at the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, located at 120 S. Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190, Chicago, Illinois 60606, or by calling 1-800-877-1600 extension 5400. Written complaints should be mailed to the Chair of the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics at the same address. The process for filing a complaint, along with a complaint investigation form, is available on the ACEND website.

2.18 The Office of the Dean of Students provides "students with opportunities that foster the development of self, respect for others, responsibility to society, and the life skills for success." This website provides a host of information on students' "Rights and Responsibilities."

2.19 Policy on Prior Learning or Learning Outside the Classroom

The DPD follows LSU policies when considering transfer students. The DPD Director is responsible for creating and updating policies on prior learning. Courses taken at other institutions that transfer into LSU as specific courses may count toward the LSU program; however, the DPD can review these courses to determine if they meet the necessary Core Knowledge Requirements. For courses that do not transfer into LSU as specific courses, students may request evaluation of those courses by the appropriate department, including the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences. To see if previously taken courses at LSU or another institution satisfy the Core Knowledge Requirements, students should provide a course syllabus, class notes, and the textbook used. The instructor of the comparable course at LSU will then make the decision. No academic credit will be awarded for life experiences or work experiences related to nutrition/dietetics/food service management. Prior life or work experiences will not exempt students from DPD course requirements.

2.20 Policy for Utilizing Experiential Learning Sites

Students might need to complete coursework or lab assignments at an off-campus site; we refer to this as experiential learning. The course instructor will give students two forms to complete for liability coverage when off campus and when using a personal vehicle to reach an outside facility. Students are not required to have health insurance, professional liability insurance, or separate travel insurance beyond LSU coverage. In professional practice settings, healthcare facilities will provide emergency treatment for students injured or ill while performing their duties, understanding that such emergency care will be at the student's own expense. We suggest students obtain healthcare coverage by either adding their parents' or guardians' insurance, if available, or purchasing coverage through LSU's university-sponsored insurance plan. The Student Trip Travel Policy is a basic medical policy for accidents only, offering \$5,000 for Medical & Hospital expenses (exclusions may apply). In case of illness (with limited exceptions), the student must file a claim through their own health insurance. You will complete and return the LSU Certificate of Privately Owned Automobiles Trip Travel Insurance Form and the LSU Request for Trip Travel/Activity Insurance Coverage Form, and return these to your course instructor. Incomplete forms may cause a delay in the start dates of the student's time at the experiential learning site. Please note that students doing experiential learning must not be used to replace employees at any assigned facility.

Please refer questions about this policy for utilizing experiential learning sites to Dr. Erin McKinley, Director of the Didactic Program in Dietetics, email: emckinley@agcenter.lsu.edu.

2.21 Verification Statements

Verification statements “verify” that a student has a degree and has completed the 2022 Accreditation Standards for Nutrition and Dietetics Didactic Programs as required by ACEND®. Verification includes a final portfolio review conducted by the DPD Director. Verification statements are issued to all students who complete the dietetics concentration, regardless of whether they plan to enter a supervised practice program in the semester before graduation. The DPD Director issues verification statements upon confirming that the student has a bachelor’s degree and has met the ACEND® Core Knowledge Requirements; these cannot be issued before graduation day. Since the program director needs written proof of graduation from the CoA, verification statements are typically emailed to the student’s LSU and personal email accounts 1-2 days after graduation. These are only sent to the recipient, unless a DI requests that they be sent directly to their program. Students can request a paper copy(ies) in writing. Graduating seniors confirm their mailing address, email address, and legal name two weeks before graduation by completing the annual Senior Exit Survey conducted by the DPD Director.

Students need at least a bachelor’s degree to qualify for a supervised practice program and to earn professional credentials as an RD/RDN. However, if the student has met the ACEND® Core Knowledge Requirements, the degree does not need to be in Nutrition and Food Science or Dietetics. Students with a degree from another university or major who have completed the DPD courses to meet the ACEND® Core Knowledge Requirements must submit copies of their final transcripts showing they meet the knowledge and skill requirements, along with their diploma as proof of a bachelor’s degree, to obtain a verification statement.

Students holding a bachelor’s degree from a university outside the United States, but who complete the ACEND® Core Knowledge Requirements at LSU, can receive a verification statement from LSU once certain conditions are met. ACEND® policies outline reciprocity agreements and how students can have their degrees evaluated to determine if they are equivalent to degrees from regionally accredited U.S. institutions. LSU adheres to these policies. The university’s International Services Office evaluates degrees from foreign institutions. A verification statement is issued once students provide evidence that their degree is the “equivalent of a bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited institution in the United States” and that they meet the ACEND® Core Knowledge Requirements, demonstrated through a final transcript from LSU.

Earning a Master of Science or a Doctor of Philosophy in the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences does not automatically qualify a student for a verification statement. Neither graduate program allows students to meet the ACEND® Core Knowledge Requirements necessary for the verification. Graduate students may pursue a verification statement by completing undergraduate coursework to satisfy the ACEND® Core Knowledge Requirements in addition to their graduate coursework. Permission for this should be obtained from the Director of the SNFS and the student’s major advisor before beginning this pathway.

The DPD Director is the only authorized person to issue these statements. Records, both paper and electronic, are kept in the DPD Director’s office. Paper copies are stored in locked files within the office. Electronic copies are secured on external hard drives also kept in these locked files. These records are to be retained indefinitely and must not be destroyed. Students graduating with another degree from LSU and completing the ACEND® Core Knowledge Requirements will also receive a verification statement under the same conditions.

LSU does not have a recency of education requirement; however, students should be aware that supervised practice programs might have such policies. Suppose students are more than five years beyond completing their bachelor's degree and have not worked in dietetics or nutrition. In that case, it is strongly advised that they repeat relevant coursework before applying for or starting a dietetic internship (DI).

2.22 Student Assessment Methods

The DPD curriculum offers learning activities to achieve all the knowledge and learning outcomes set by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics. It is designed to build on concepts introduced in lower-division courses and to enhance students' competence as they advance through the program. Students are prepared for proficiency in the nutrition care process through progressive coursework, using a variety of learning methods. Faculty evaluate student progress through assignments, projects, case studies, and exams. Group projects are also included to promote teamwork and collaboration skills. Performance reports are regularly completed during advising sessions each semester.

Section_3. Services Available to Students at LSU

A wide array of services is available to students at LSU, some of which are paid through student fees and others through other mechanisms. Eligibility for services and current fees are available to students online.

3.1 The Student Health Center maintains a website that details its student services. Important services include medical clinics, immunizations, pharmacy, nutrition counseling, and the mental health clinic, with mental health counseling available. Health insurance for students is also available through the Student Health Center. The Health Center also provides victims of sexual assault with support and medical services. [Click here for the SHC website.](#) All faculty in the Division of Human Nutrition and Food are aware that the Student Health Center provides services for students who need referrals for physical or mental health issues.

3.2 The University Recreation Center (UREC) on campus is available to students. The facility has a wide array of amenities, including weight/fitness/cardio areas, a gymnasium, a climbing gym, racquetball courts, a pool, and saunas. There is also an outdoor field complex with tennis courts, volleyball courts, and softball fields. [Click here for the UREC website.](#)

3.3 The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is physically located on campus in Johnston Hall and is a unit within the Office of the Dean of Students. Services available and documentation that students must provide to the ODS are provided for a wide range of conditions, including learning disabilities, attention disorders, and physical and psychological disabilities. [Click here for the ODS website.](#)

3.4 Academic Counseling is available to students through various sources. An advantage of being in the College of Agriculture is that students enter their senior year directly and can meet immediately with an advisor. In Nutritional Sciences, all advisors are prepared to refer students to other services if needed and can also provide career counseling. Students can also meet with Jennie Sparks, email: jsparks2@lsu.edu, in the COA. If students do not enter directly into the COA, they join the University College, which houses the Center for the Freshman Year, a non-degree-granting academic college at LSU. Students are placed in this college and may be given

up to two semesters, regardless of whether they are full-time or part-time. Career and other counseling are offered through the University Center for Advising and Counseling (UCAC), which students would join in their sophomore year if they haven't already been admitted to the COA. Some testing services are available for students. Placement testing is provided at orientation, but testing for conditions like attention deficit disorders is not available on campus.

3.5 Entering a large university like LSU can be a daunting experience, especially if you are from a small town or if you are the first in your family to attend college at all. LSU provides a host of programs that will help you get the most out of your first year here. The *First Year Experience* is designed to help students understand what is available for them at LSU.

3.6 The Center for Academic Success provides a wide array of services, including tests of learning styles to help students succeed at LSU, information on study habits, and tutoring. [Click here for the Center's website.](#) The *Olinde Career Center* (located in the Student Union) is also helpful in advising students, providing interviewing skills, and helping design resumes. [Click here for the Career Center Website.](#)

3.7 MyLSU is a dynamic electronic kiosk that provides a range of applications to LSU students, faculty, and staff based on their relationship with the University. It functions as a personalized web desktop accessed via a browser, making it independent of computing platforms, location, or normal business hours. In addition to standard applications available to every account, additional applications are added to the desktop on an individual basis. Through their MyLSU accounts, students can access email, TigerBytes II, a personal file storage center, and download software through TigerWare.

3.8 Agriculture Residential College The Ag Residential College (ARC) welcomes all first-year students in the College of Agriculture. The residential college emphasizes “Ag Leadership,” a central theme throughout the two-year program. By taking several core courses together, students will form relationships more quickly with classmates and professors both inside and outside the classroom. The residence hall will provide opportunities for travel and host several special interest lectures addressing the diverse needs of today’s constantly changing world. Living in a “mini campus” environment within the larger LSU campus, students will develop a greater sense of awareness, cultural competence, leadership, and community. Click here for the ARC website.

Requirements

- Admission to LSU and the College of Agriculture
- A Windows-compatible laptop

Features

- Scholarships for ARC students
- Reserved spaces in courses
- Multimedia classroom within the residence hall
- Meeting space for events
- Monthly seminar series
- Faculty and staff members hold office hours and review sessions inside the residence hall.
- Proximity to the LSU lakes, the Recreational Center, and your department’s buildings

Application Procedure

1. Apply to the University.
2. Submit your Residential Life online housing application.
3. List the Agriculture Residential College as your housing preference.

DPD students are encouraged to participate in the ARC.

3.9 Financial Aid

The catalog and the websites for LSU undergraduate admissions provide students with information about Financial Aid. This information includes scholarships, the Chancellor's Future Leaders in Research Program, Federal Loan Programs, Grant Programs—including Federal Pell Grants, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, and Academic Competitiveness Grants—campus employment, and veterans' benefits. Additionally, these sites contain details about TOPS (Louisiana's Tuition Opportunity Program for Students). This program offers scholarships covering college tuition for high school graduates with a 2.5 GPA and 20 ACT composite scores. Since LSU's admission requirements are higher than TOPS standards, every Louisiana first-year student admitted to the university receives a state-funded merit scholarship (TOPS). Click here for the Financial Aid & Scholarships website.

3.10 How, When, and Where Students Obtain Information about LSU

Students receive the above information multiple times through various methods. All details are available on the LSU website, and students are encouraged to visit it. Additionally, there are mobile apps that can be downloaded to access LSU information. First-year and transfer orientations are mandatory for incoming students; these include general and college-specific sessions. These orientations provide details on "sessions, schedules, and costs," registration, and placement. To get an early preview, check out the hyperlink on first-year student orientation. Reinforcement is available through the COA orientations and, for first-year students, through AGRI 1001, Introduction to Agriculture. In this course, opportunities and educational requirements across all fields of agriculture are discussed.

Section_4. Academic Requirements

4.1 The Flagship Agenda is LSU's strategic plan to become a more nationally competitive university by the year 2025. The goal is that no student or faculty member should have to leave Louisiana in search of a better education or opportunity. [Click here for the LSU Strategic Plan website.](#) The goals of the Flagship Agenda are:

Discovery: Expand discovery through transformative research and creative activities addressing contemporary and enduring issues that shape the way we live in the world.

- Increase nationally recognized research and creative activities.
- Expand interdisciplinary solutions to significant social, environmental, economic, cultural, and educational problems.
- Increase partnerships with industry to develop intellectual property and foster commercial applications.

Learning: Enhance a faculty-led and student-centered learning environment that develops engaged citizens and enlightened leaders.

- Increase the number of students with strong skills in critical thinking, creative problem-solving, and effective communication.

- Produce greater numbers of students who become intellectual and civic leaders.
- Broaden faculty, staff, and student engagement in a rich intellectual and creative campus culture.

Diversity: Strengthen the intellectual environment by broadening the cultural diversity of the LSU community.

- Increase diversity among faculty, staff, and students.
- Increase the number of students who work with or live in diverse communities.
- Expand supportive communities for minority, international, and first-generation students.

Engagement: Promote engagement of faculty, staff, and students in the transformation of communities.

- Increase collaboration with state and local leaders.
- Enhance our commitment to involvement in economic, social, and cultural activities.
- Extend the influence of scholarly expertise to benefit our state, region, and the globe.

4.2 Undergraduate Degree Requirements at LSU

LSU has the responsibility to protect its educational mission, the health and safety of its community, and the property within it by regulating the use of university facilities and setting standards of scholarship and conduct for its students. Because of its educational mission, the university must also exercise its disciplinary authority in a manner that supports the development and education of students.

4.3 Undergraduate Scholastic Requirements in the College of Agriculture

- In addition to the university requirement of completing 120 hours, the College of Agriculture has these additional academic requirements:
- Students must complete at least one general education English composition course and one general education analytical reasoning course with a “C” or better within the first 30 hours of study.
- Students who fail to earn a 2.00 average in each of two consecutive semesters (or one semester and a summer term) and whose LSU or overall grade point average is below 2.00 will be declared ineligible to continue in the College of Agriculture for one regular semester.
- Seniors who have completed the first semester of their senior year, are degree candidates, and are under scholastic suspension from the University may be placed on probation for one additional semester at the discretion of the dean of the College of Agriculture.

4.4 The Nutritional Sciences Curriculum (Dietetics Concentration)

Information about the dietetics program is available in the General Catalog under the College of Agriculture. This link will direct you to the catalog, where you can expand the course number for a description of each course. **Students must earn a grade of “C-” or higher in all required NFS courses, as well as BIOL 2160 and 2083.** The curriculum is summarized below. If you entered under an earlier catalog, your courses may differ slightly—please consult that catalog for your specific course requirements and critical requirements.

Semester 1

ENGL 1001 English Composition (3)
BIOL 1201 Biology for Science Majors I (3)
BIOL 1208 Biology Laboratory for Science Majors I (1)
MATH 1023 College Algebra and Trigonometry (5) or MATH 1021 (3) & MATH 1022 (3)
CHEM 1201 General Chemistry I (3)
Total Semester Hours: 15

Semester 2

CHEM 1202 General Chemistry (3)
CHEM 1212 General Chemistry Laboratory (2)
NFS 1110 Introduction to Nutritional Sciences (3)
PSYC 2000 Introduction to Psychology (3)
NFS 1014 Food Theory and Skills (4)
Total Semester Hours: 15

Semester 3

CHEM 2060 Survey of Organic Chemistry (3)
ANTH 1003 Introduction to Cultural and Social Anthropology (3) or
SOCL 2001 Introductory Sociology (3)
NFS 2112 Human Lifecycle Nutrition (3)
BIOL 1011 Microorganisms and Man (3)
BIOL 1012 Microorganisms and Man Laboratory (1)
KIN 2500 Human Anatomy (3)
Total Semester Hours: 16

Semester 4

ENGL 2000 English Composition (3)
NFS 2110 Methods of Nutritional Assessment (3)
BIOL 2160 Human Physiology (3)
EXST 2201 Introduction to Statistical Analysis (4)
NFS 2000 Fundamentals of Food Science (3)
Total Semester Hours: 16

Semester 5

BIOL 2083 The Elements of Biochemistry (3)
NFS 3110 Nutrition Counseling and Education (3)
NFS 3000 Food Safety (3)
CMST 2060 Public Speaking (3)
NFS 3025 Professionalism in Dietetics (3)
Total Semester Hours: 15

Semester 6

General Education course - Arts (3)
NFS 3114 Food and Culture (3)

NFS 3115 Human Nutrition and Metabolism (3)
NFS 3116 Community Nutrition (3)
MGT 3200 Principles of Management (3)
Total Semester Hours: 15

Semester 7

NFS 3119 Fundamentals of Quantity Food Production (4)
NFS 4111 Nutrition and Disease I (4)
Elective (3)
General Education course - Humanities (3)
Total Semester Hours: 14

Semester 8

NFS 4023 Management in Dietetics (3)
NFS 4110 Capstone in Nutritional Sciences (3)
NFS 4021 Contemporary Topics in Nutrition (1)
NFS 4114 Nutrition and Disease II (4)
General Education course - Humanities – Literature (3)
Total Semester Hours: 14
120 Total Sem. Hrs.

General Education Humanities: three hours chosen from a 2000-level English course on the General Education list and three hours selected from any course on the General Education Humanities list.

4.5 Meet the DPD Faculty

Lindsay Barleycorn, MS, RD, LDN, CDCES (Instructor & Undergraduate Coordinator), teaches NFS 4111 (Nutrition & Disease I), NFS 4114 (Nutrition & Disease II), NFS 1110 (Introduction to Nutritional Sciences), NFS 2112 Lifecycle Nutrition, and NFS 4021 (Contemporary Topics in Nutrition). Ms. Barleycorn is an LSU Dietetics Alum with recent practice experience in oncology, diabetes, and outpatient nutrition.

Shellie Doré, MS, RD, LDN (Senior Instructor), teaches NFS 1110 (Introduction to Nutritional Sciences), 3119 (Fundamentals of Quantity Food Production), and 4023 (Management in Dietetics). Mrs. Doré has a wealth of experience in these courses and is certified to teach Serve-Safe certification, required of all students taking NFS 3119.

Michael J. Keenan, PhD (Professor), teaches or has taught 3115 (Human Nutrition and Metabolism) and 4021 (Contemporary Topics in Nutrition) in the undergraduate program. Dr. Keenan brings a wealth of knowledge based on his research in functional foods, notably resistant starch, and assessment of gene arrays underlying responses to resistant starches. He has obtained several grants and publications for these studies.

Brandi Milioto, MS, RD (Instructor), teaches NFS 2110 (Methods of Nutritional Assessment) and NFS 3110 (Nutrition Counseling and Education). Milioto has professional experience as the coordinator in the WIC clinic in Ascension Parish (county) at the Gonzales Health Unit.

Erin M. McKinley, PhD, RD, LD, CLC, MCHES, FAND (Associate Professor & Director of the DPD and the Graduate Programs). Dr. McKinley teaches NFS 3025 (Professionalism in Dietetics) and NFS 3116 (Community Nutrition). Her research areas include survey instrument development and studying consumer behavior for medicinal plant and mushroom products.

Judith Myhand, MS (Senior Instructor), teaches NFS 1014 (Food Theory and Skills), NFS 2112 (Human Lifecycle Nutrition), and NFS 3114 (Food and Culture) as well as manages our on-site cooking lab in the Human Ecology Building.

Georgianna Tuuri, PhD, RD (Professor & Chair). Dr. Tuuri teaches NFS 4110 (Capstone in Nutritional Sciences) and NFS 4021 (Contemporary Topics in Nutrition). Her principal research interests are in body composition assessment and pediatric obesity. She has researched bone density and improving the intake of fruit and vegetables in elementary school children.

4.6 Faculty Advisors

Faculty advisors play a vital role in guiding students through our curriculum and offering specific advice on various topics. When students enter LSU as first-year or transfer students and join the College of Agriculture, they go through orientation, where they will meet Dr. McKinley to help plan their schedules. Afterward, students are assigned to a specific faculty member for advising. It is recommended that students meet with their advisor each semester; however, only students with a registration hold are required to do so. If a student has such a hold, they must be advised, and their advisor will lift the registration hold. Advisors are assigned based on the first initial of the student's last name.

Faculty Member	Address	Phone and Email	Student assigned: Last name begins with
Brandi Milioto	257 Knapp	578-1537 bmilioto@lsu.edu	A-B Dietetics/ A-K Nutr Premed
Dr. Erin McKinley	285 Knapp	578-1631 emckinley1@lsu.edu	C-I Dietetics
Lindsay Barleycorn	271 Knapp	578-2598 LBarleycorn@agcenter.lsu.edu	J-L Dietetics L-Z Nutr Premed
Shellie Dore	205 Knapp	578-3661 sdore@lsu.edu	M-P Dietetics
Dr. Mike Keenan	209 Knapp	578-1708 mkeen@lsu.edu	R-Z Dietetics
Judy Myhand	219 HUEC	578-1718 jmyhand@agcenter.lsu.edu	All Nutrition, Health & Society

To be advised, you must schedule an appointment with your advisor using the Navigate system. This system houses the information the faculty needs to inform you effectively each semester. You can schedule appointments with your assigned advisor and the Office of Student Services using the [Navigate](#) app. Please schedule all appointments at least 24 hours in advance. To view your degree progress, you can also download your degree audit from your Workday Student account. You can also get a printout of your degree audit from the College of

Agriculture. All information on course availability, scheduling, and student information is now in Workday Student.

Section_5. The Process of Becoming a Registered Dietitian (RD) or Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN)

5.1 What is a Registered Dietitian?

According to the Commission on Dietetic Registration, “Registered Dietitians (RD) or Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDN) are individuals who have:

- Completed the minimum of a Baccalaureate degree granted by a U.S. regionally accredited college or university, or foreign equivalent.
- Met current minimum academic requirements (Didactic Program in Dietetics) as approved by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.
- Completed a supervised practice program accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.
- completed the **Registration Examination for Dietitians**.
- Remitted the annual registration fee.
- complied with the Professional Development Portfolio recertification requirements.”

5.2 What can Registered Dietitians Do?

Registered Dietitians are experts in food and nutrition. If you can think of anything related to food, an RD can do it. Some career opportunities are:

- Clinical dietitian in a hospital, long-term care facility, or outpatient clinic
- Public Health or Community Dietitian in any health facility
- Consultant dietitian in private practice
- Sports Dietitian
- Cooperative Extension agent
- Research
- Food service managers
- Food companies
- Pharmaceutical companies
- Public policy development
- Education
- National Health Organizations
- Non-Profit Advocacy Groups

More information about careers in dietetics can be found on the website of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Graduates of LSU’s DPD who have completed dietetic internships and passed the registration exam work as dietitians for the US Olympic Team and the New Orleans Saints, in Corporate Wellness, as renal dietitians, as nutrition support dietitians, in research at the Pennington Biomedical Research Center, in WIC, as clinical dietitians, as weight loss counselors, in private practice, as diabetes educators, in the Cooperative Extension Service, in food service management, and public health.

The [US Bureau of Labor Statistics website link](#) provides more information on careers in dietetics.

5.3 How much money will you make as an RD?

According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, the median pay is over \$69,680 per year (\$33.50 per hour), and the job outlook indicates the profession is growing 7% faster than average (2023 is the most recent year provided). Entry-level salaries typically range from about \$35,000 to \$50,000, depending on the state, job, employer, economic conditions, and other factors. However, as with any profession, salaries and fees vary by region, employment setting, scope of responsibility, and the supply of RDs. Salaries tend to increase with years of experience, and many RDs, especially those in management, business, and consulting, earn median incomes.

5.4 How do I get to be a Registered Dietitian?

After completing the DPD at LSU (or at any school), students must apply for and complete a Dietetic Internship successfully to be eligible to sit for the registration exam. Applying for internships can be confusing and time-consuming; it also comes in the senior year, when the coursework in the DPD is the most challenging. To help students in the application process, the DPD director holds two workshops per year (fall and spring), and the NFS 3025 course is dedicated to this process. This allows students to understand what is essential to achieve as an undergraduate before applying for internships. It provides a timeline of what is needed when asking faculty members and others for letters of recommendation, as well as general and specific advice. These are geared toward juniors and seniors.

5.5 After completing your supervised practice program, you will be eligible to sit the computer-based *registration examination*. The exam covers all parts of our undergraduate program at LSU, as well as information you will learn in your internship. Remember that this is the current breakdown of the exam, and this may change by the time you take the exam. It is strongly recommended that you take a review course at the end of your internship or after completing your internship, before taking the registration exam.

5.6 The Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) is the credentialing agency for the American Dietetic Association, now known as the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Its purpose is to serve the public by establishing and enforcing standards for certification and issuing credentials to individuals who meet these standards. The CDR has sole and independent authority over all certification matters, including but not limited to setting standards, determining fees, managing finances, and overseeing administration. CDR offers certification for dietetic technicians, registered (DTR), registered dietitians (RD), and board-certified specialists in pediatric nutrition (CSP), renal nutrition (CSR), gerontological nutrition (CSG), and sports dietetics (CSSD).” Click [here](#) for the CDR website.

5.7 Licensure

After passing the exam and becoming a Registered Dietitian, there is one final step you must take to practice. Louisiana is one of forty-four states, including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, that have laws regulating dietitians or nutritionists through licensure, certification, or registration. As stated clearly on this website, “Dietetics practitioners are licensed by states to ensure that only qualified, trained professionals provide nutrition services or advice to individuals seeking or requiring nutrition care. Only state-licensed dietetics professionals can offer nutrition counseling. Unlicensed practitioners may face legal action for practicing without a license. States with certification laws restrict the use of titles (e.g., dietitian or nutritionist) to

those who meet specific requirements; however, uncertified individuals can still practice. Consumers seeking nutrition therapy should be cautious and aware of the qualifications of their provider.” Louisiana was among the first states to require licensure of registered dietitians (1987). All registered dietitians, regardless of their practice setting, must be licensed to work in this state. The Louisiana Board of Examiners in Dietetics and Nutrition (LBEDN) provides information on how to obtain and keep a license, who needs one, the laws related to licensure, the rights and responsibilities associated with licensure, the conditions under which a license can be revoked, and actions that can be taken against those violating licensing laws. Click here for the LBEDN website. If you plan to practice outside of Louisiana, check the licensing laws in the state where you intend to practice. The CDR website linked above offers a quick way to find licensing laws in all states.

5.8 Continuing Education

Lifelong learning is necessary for all healthcare professionals, including registered dietitians, to maintain their credentials. Therefore, each registered dietitian must create and update a learning plan for a Professional Development Portfolio, which helps meet the requirement of 75 hours of continuing education over five years. The continuing education activities should align with your career goals. Options include graduate studies, research, workshops, meetings, journal articles, lectures, seminars, webinars, advanced certifications, and more. Remember, the activities you select must be tailored to YOUR goals as outlined in YOUR Professional Development Portfolio. What happens if you don't complete the full 75 hours within the allotted time? You would need to retake the registration exam to keep your RD credential.

Section_6. Special Opportunities for Students

6.1 The Student Nutrition & Dietetics Association (SNDA) is a student-led professional organization that introduces students to the program and the profession, helps them network with other students in the major, and offers leadership, advocacy, and community service opportunities. SNDA is registered with the Student Organizations office through the Dean of Students. This group is open to all students, with particular focus on dietetics, NHS, and Nutrition Pre-Meds. Student officers organize and lead meetings, and plan activities and volunteer events for members. Recent events have included assembling Thanksgiving baskets for low-income individuals, participating in a heart walk to raise awareness and funds for heart disease, and more! SNDA also hosts a speakers' forum covering a variety of topics. Dietitians discuss practice opportunities and challenges, internship directors share what they look for in interns, and current interns talk about the application process and their experiences. Find SNDA on Facebook and Instagram @sndaatlsu. Faculty Advisor: Dr. Erin McKinley @drerinmckinley

6.2 NFS 3900 Nutrition and Food Science Research (1-3)

Prerequisite: permission of the department. May be taken for a maximum of 6 semester hours of credit. Students outline and execute a project and prepare a written report on topics related to nutrition, dietetics, management, processing, quality control, safety, and nutritional evaluation of foodstuffs. This course is open to advanced students of high academic standing with the consent of the director. It may also be taken for up to 6 hours of credit. Students are responsible for registering with a faculty member to select their area of reading and research. This class enables students to work closely with a faculty member on a research project or to conduct directed readings on a topic of particular interest. The options are limited only by the

student's imagination and the faculty available. Past students in this course have had opportunities to publish manuscripts with faculty members and present at national meetings. Could you give me an example of what students have done previously? Sara David studied the nutritional and monetary impact of fast food on women of low socioeconomic status, as well as food spending patterns among low-income women who receive or do not receive food stamps, and those who are food secure or insecure. Her work resulted in two presentations at the Food and Nutrition Conference and Expo, the annual meeting of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. An interesting note about the abstracts listed below is that the Community Nutrition Class also participated in the research project..

- David S, O'Neil CE, Smith J, Tiller V, Monroe PA. Nutritional and Monetary Impact of Fast Food on Low Socioeconomic Status Women. *Jour Am Diet Assoc* 102 (Suppl 2): A-47, 2002.
- O'Neil CE, David S, Smith J, LSU Community Nutrition Class, Tiller V, Monroe PA. Food Spending Patterns by Low-Income Women Who Receive or do not Receive Food Stamps or who are Food Secure or Insecure. *Jour Am Diet Assoc* 102 (Suppl 2): A-48, 2002.

6.3 NFS 4027 Practicum in Dietetics (1-3)

Prereq: majors only; for students in dietetics concentration only; 60 hrs. in Nutrition and Food Sciences curriculum; overall GPA of 3.2; and permission of instructor. Each hour of credit requires 60 hours of supervised experience. May be taken or repeated, when topics vary, for a max. of 3 hrs. of credit—supervised professional experience designed to integrate academic learning with dietetics practice.

In this course, students select a registered dietitian with whom they would like to work--any practice arena, anywhere. Then, working with the faculty advisor, students outline their course objectives and describe how they will complete them. We have had students work with a wide range of dietitians, including diabetes educators, community dietitians, and renal dietitians. The course is designed to introduce you to dietetic practice in a field of interest to you.

6.4 Undergraduate Grants through the College of Agriculture

There are several ways that interested students can work with faculty members on research projects (NFS 3900 and the Honors Program), but this is a unique opportunity for students. The College of Agriculture offers the opportunity for students to apply for a research grant to complete a research project with a faculty member. These grants provide up to \$1900 for students' research or travel. Students in the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences who have written grants and conducted studies have had the opportunity to publish their findings and to present their research at national meetings.

6.5 The Honors Program

Students with exceptional academic potential may face challenges at the Honors College through advanced coursework, lectures, seminars, and independent research. More information about admission to the Honors College can be found in the General Catalog. To earn full College Honors, students must complete all requirements set by their college, including at least 32 hours of honors courses, such as a minimum of six hours of HNRS coursework, 12 hours at the 3000+ level following Upper Division Honors departmental requirements, a senior thesis following thesis guidelines, and maintain a 3.5 GPA overall, at LSU, and in honors courses. Click here for the Honors College website.

Students who do not enter the Honors College early at LSU can still have a remarkable experience by joining in their junior year and participating in the Upper Division Honors program. The School of Nutrition and Food Sciences offers this program for outstanding students majoring in Nutritional Sciences. It requires 12 semester hours of honors courses, including 6 hours of honors option courses and six honors thesis hours (HNRS 4000), which is identical to the final work full College Honors students complete.

The Honors Student Handbooks provide more details on earning Full College Honors and Upper Division Honors distinction. Click here for the handbook webpage.

Eligibility: Students completing their sophomore year with a GPA of 3.5 or above on both LSU and overall academic work are eligible for admission to the Upper Division Honors Program in Human Ecology. Students may talk with Dr. O'Neil or Ms. Myhand about the honors program, but should apply for admission at or before the beginning of the Junior Year with Mr. Michael Blanding in the Honors College.

Program Requirements:

To achieve Upper Division Honors Distinction in Nutritional Sciences, a student must:

1. Maintain a GPA of 3.5
2. Complete at least 6 semester hours of honors option courses in his/her significant area from among these courses: NFS 3115 (Human Nutrition and Metabolism), NFS 3119 (Fundamentals of Quantity Food Production); NFS 3116 (Community Nutrition), NFS 4111 (Nutrition and Disease I), NFS 4114 (Nutrition and Disease II); and NFS 4110 (Capstone in Nutrition Sciences).

In these honors option courses, students will enroll in the class as they usually would, but they will do "a little something extra." This would be fit for the course and might involve authoring a paper or presenting a case study to the class.

3. Complete a senior thesis with independent research and reporting under the direction of a School of Nutrition and Food Sciences faculty member. The student will enroll in *HNRS 4000* for six semester hours of thesis credit and completion of a thesis project during the senior year. The student will defend the project in an oral examination before a committee of three faculty members, including the primary advisor. At least one member of the committee shall be from outside the department.

Recognition: Students completing the requirements above will be recognized at graduation through the designation: *Upper Division Honors in Nutritional Sciences*

6.6 Other Opportunities

6.6.1 *The President's Future Leaders in Research Program* "offers a unique opportunity for students to conduct research early in their college career. Students are partnered with a faculty member in the field of their choice to work side-by-side in a research setting, learning what a career in their chosen field may be like. As a member of the research team, students receive guidance and support to expand their knowledge and skills. Students participating in this program can work up to 20 hours per week to earn up to \$1,550 per year for eight semesters. Students are paid an hourly wage, and paychecks are sent bi-weekly. [Click here for more information.](#)

LSU Discover provides support for students conducting undergraduate research in the form of travel grants and stipends. Students can present their work at Discover Day, an actual day of celebration of undergraduate research and creative activity. [Click here for more information.](#)

6.6.2 *Campus Life* is under the auspices of the Dean of Students and provides a wide array of leadership opportunities within and outside of student organizations. [Click here for more information.](#)

6.6.3 *Through Academic Programs Abroad*, students travel worldwide to study for a summer, semester, or academic year. Students earn credit toward LSU degrees and return to LSU to complete their degrees. Study abroad is open to all majors. Through overseas research, students are immersed in foreign languages and cultures, have access to coursework unavailable on the home campus, develop personal independence and global awareness, and enjoy academic and travel opportunities that enrich their general education. Many students find that studying abroad gives them an advantage in the job market and in graduate school applications. Others discover routes to international careers in business, government, law, and the arts. [Click here for more information.](#)

6.6.4 Although Minors are not required of students within the College of Agriculture, they are available and recommended. Students in the DPD have minored in a wide variety of subjects, including biology, chemistry, business, psychology, sociology, and dance.

6.6.5 *LSU CxC Distinguished Communicator Program* is for self-motivated LSU undergraduates who want to refine their communication skills and excel in their chosen professions. Students who successfully achieve this unique distinction are recognized with a medal at graduation and receive a permanent commendation on their official transcripts, giving them significant leverage in today's job market and other post-graduate pursuits. Upon completion of the program, these students possess the competitive skills and knowledge needed for 21st-century leadership. LSU is one of the only universities in the country that recognizes students who excel in communicating within their discipline.

The Dietetics curriculum currently has five communication-intensive (C-I) courses, NFS 3025 (Written and Spoken), NFS 3116 (Technology and Visual), NFS 3119 (Written and Spoken), NFS 4023 (Written and Visual), and NFS 4110 (Written and Visual) that help meet some of the requirements of the program. For more information, reach out to Dr. Erin McKinley (emckinley1@lsu.edu) or check out the CxC website. [Click here to learn more about the program.](#)

6.6.6 Clearly, there is no way this Handbook can include all the fantastic opportunities at LSU, so to find out about others, consult the General Catalog.

Section_7. Applying for Supervised Practice (Internship) Programs

After completing the DPD, students must apply for and complete a supervised practice program or internship to be eligible to sit for the registration exam. Applying for internships can be confusing and time-consuming; it also occurs during the senior year, when coursework in the DPD is most challenging. To assist students with the application process, the DPD director hosts a DICAS bootcamp each fall in addition to the NFS 3025 course. Course lists are also available upon request from Dr. McKinley each fall. The application guide provides detailed instructions

for the process and includes the application and recommendation forms. It also contains a timeline, guidelines for requesting letters of recommendation from faculty and others, and other general and specific advice.

Section_8. Frequently Asked Questions

What is the difference between a Registered Dietitian and a “nutritionist?”

A Registered Dietitian (RD) or Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) has finished classroom (didactic) and supervised practice experience and passed a demanding exam. Besides maintaining their professional credentials, RDs are required to complete a structured program of ongoing education. Many states have licensing laws (see 5.7 Licensure); therefore, most RDs are also licensed in the state where they work. Anyone can call themselves a “nutritionist.” No certification is required, and someone calling themselves a “nutritionist” can have extensive nutrition training, including a doctoral degree, or none at all. When you hear that term, be sure to ask for the person’s full qualifications or credentials.

Can I sit the registration examination to become an RD after receiving my BS degree?

No. LSU provides a Didactic Program in Dietetics. As such, students must complete a dietetic internship and a master’s degree before they are eligible to sit this examination. Internships include at least 1000 hours of supervised practice, and they must be completed at an ACEND-accredited internship program before you can sit the exam. Students can, however, sit the exam to become a dietetic technician, registered (DTR) after completing the DPD. See the [Commission on Dietetic Registration website link](#) for additional information.

How do I get a verification statement?

Verification statements “verify” that a student has a degree and has completed the knowledge and skill requirements of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. These two elements are required to enter a dietetic internship. Verification statements are issued to all students who complete the Nutritional Sciences curriculum and dietetics concentration. The Didactic Program Director issues verification statements when she has verified that the student has a bachelor’s degree, and they cannot be issued before graduation day. Since the program director must have written confirmation from the College of Agriculture, they are mailed to the student’s permanent mailing address about a week after graduation.

Students with a degree from another university or in another major who attend LSU’s program must supply copies of their final transcripts and their diplomas as proof that they have a bachelor’s degree.

My degree is in Nutritional Sciences/Pre-medical. Can I apply for a dietetic internship?

Yes and no, the pre-medical concentration does not prepare students to enter a traditional dietetic internship directly. Many of the courses in the two concentrations are the same, but the difference lies in the food, management, and food service classes that students in the dietetics concentration take. Dietetics students also complete courses in psychology and economics. Without these courses and the knowledge and skill elements they provide, students cannot obtain a verification statement to enter an internship program. There are now accredited coordinated master’s programs that allow students from any BS/BA background who meet their admissions criteria and have the minimum prerequisite courses (these vary by program, but may include Anatomy, Physiology, and Intro to Nutrition, Chemistry,

Microbiology, and Lifecycle Nutrition). These programs last 3-4 years and include the DPD knowledge components, a master's degree, and the internship component in one package. As of July 2023, only fifty programs nationwide are designed this way. If you have questions about these programs, please see Dr. McKinley.

I am a student in the dietetics concentration; I want to go to medical (or physician assistant, dental, physical therapy, or occupational therapy) school. What should I do?

The DPD focuses on providing the knowledge and skills needed to become an RD. However, any student can apply to medical schools if they meet the requirements for a specific school. So, the answer depends on your progress in the dietetics program. If you're early in the program, switching to the nutritional sciences or pre-med concentration is straightforward. If you're a junior or senior, you can still switch, but it might be just as easy to stay in dietetics and take the courses most medical schools require: BIOL 1201, 1202, 1208; CHEM 1201, 1202, 1212, 2261, 2262, 2364; PHYS 2001, 2108, 2002, 2109. Dietetics students are already required to take BIOL 1201 and CHEM 1201 and 1202. They can also opt for higher-level courses in organic chemistry, such as CHEM 2261/2262 instead of CHEM 2060 (both courses must be completed for the substitute) or in biochemistry, like BIOL 4087 instead of BIOL 2083. Keep in mind these are LSU course numbers. Be sure to check with the medical schools you apply to for their specific entrance requirements—most now require courses like statistics (EXST 2201 at LSU) and psychology (PSYC 2000 at LSU), which dietetics students must take. For other health or allied health professionals, please consult with individual programs.

I am a student in the dietetics concentration, but I do not want to be an RD. What *can* I do with my degree?

The DPD is designed to provide the knowledge and skills needed to become a registered dietitian; however, the program also offers a solid foundation in the sciences, especially nutritional sciences, alongside communication skills, critical thinking, problem-solving, teamwork, and leadership abilities. Graduates can pursue careers in public health nutrition, pharmaceutical sales, food service management, and public policy, or work as a health educator. Graduate school may also be an option for you. Additionally, you can take the exam to become a Dietetic Technician, Registered.

Graduate School Questions: Do I need to go to graduate school? Does my graduate school training need to be in nutrition? I want to go to graduate school. Should I go before or after my internship? Should I go to graduate school while I'm in my internship?

No, you do not need to attend graduate school to practice as an RD—but this will change in the future. However, about 50% of RDs already have a graduate degree. The first-year class of 2019 is the first cohort legally required to earn a master's degree to sit for the RD exam. A graduate degree can open more opportunities faster than not having one.

Your graduate degree doesn't need to be in nutrition, but that is an option. Think about your academic and career interests and choose a field that excites you. For example, if you're interested in counseling, consider psychology or counseling; if you like public health, think about a Master of Public Health (MPH); if management appeals to you, an MBA might be helpful. There are many other options too, from Public Policy or Public Administration to Epidemiology, Kinesiology, or Health Education—your interests and imagination are your limits.

Whether you complete a graduate degree before, during, or after your internship depends on you; students in our program have taken all three routes. Consider your family situation and financial circumstances, along with your career goals, before making this choice.

I failed BIOL 2083 (biochemistry). Can I get into NFS 3115 and repeat BIOL 2083 at the same time?

No. We want to maximize your chances of doing well in the program by preparing you through the pre-requisite classes. We have studied the grade distributions of the Human Ecology courses and the required science courses and have looked at the odds that students with specific grades in the science courses will do well in NFS 3115 and NFS 4111/4114. Without doing well in BIOL 2083, the odds are that students will not do well in NFS 3115 or NFS 4111/4114.

It is also important to note that if you fail a required course at LSU, you must repeat that course at LSU. Therefore, if you fail BIOL 2083, you must repeat BIOL 2083 at LSU. Further, students who fail a course twice at LSU may not retake the course without approval from the dean of the student's major college.

I did not do well in biology, chemistry, or any course; should I repeat it to bring up my grade point average (GPA)?

There is a lot to consider when answering this question. At LSU, courses can only be repeated if you receive a grade of "D" or "F." LSU now has a grade exclusion policy where courses in which you may have received a D or F can be repeated. [Click here to review the policy.](#) The catalog, linked above, explains this well. Also, note if you fail a required course at LSU, you must repeat it at LSU. FYI – "repeat and delete" does not exist. If you repeat a course, the prior grade will still appear on your transcript, and you need to acknowledge ALL attempts on your applications for Dietetic Internships.

Finally, there are courses within the DPD requirements in which you must receive a grade of "C" or higher--these are all required NFS courses, and BIOL 2083 (biochemistry) and BIOL 2160 (physiology). If you do not receive a "C-" in any of these courses, you must repeat them to graduate.

Can I transfer courses from Junior College?

The answer is maybe. First, you can have no more than 60 hours, or no courses will transfer from a junior college. Second, as with all college transfers, we need to have a corresponding course; otherwise, the course(s) will come in as hours only and not as a specific course.

I am not doing well in my courses. Where can I go for help?

Your first step is to meet your course instructor. Instructors want students to succeed and are willing to help. All instructors are required to hold office hours—be sure to use them. Many departments also offer supplemental instruction or tutoring, which is highly recommended. The Center for Academic Success is also available to assist students; this program was named the best learning center in the US and is worth visiting. Lastly, private tutors are available too, though they can be expensive.

I would suggest two other actions. The first is to find a study partner or join a study group—this often helps a lot. If you're struggling in multiple courses, I recommend talking to your academic advisor to determine if this is the right major for you.

How important are grades when applying for internships?

Although an internship director reviews an applicant's entire application, including grades, work experience, recommendations, and volunteer activities, grades are usually the first factor they consider when evaluating potential candidates. Overall grades are, of course, important; however, grades in the DPD courses—especially nutrition and sciences—are typically weighted most heavily. Many programs will not accept students with a GPA below their stated cut-off; very few are more flexible. Some internships will reject students with a grade lower than a C in a major course or science-related class. Having these grades does not guarantee acceptance into an internship.

I have worked in a restaurant for 15 years--can I get credit for this?

I am sorry--no. Although some schools give credit for life experiences, LSU does not unless students take a proficiency examination. Moreover, the complete DPD course requirements cannot be waived.

I have a non-nutrition-related undergraduate degree; can I become an RD by obtaining a master's degree in Nutrition at LSU?

The MS program at LSU does not prepare students to enter a dietetic internship—students without a verification statement from their undergraduate program need to complete the foundation knowledge and competency requirements promulgated by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics for DPDs. Thus, students in the MS program would need to take a substantial number of undergraduate courses to meet this requirement. Students can elect to do this, although it will slow their progress in the graduate program. Three of the undergraduate courses: NFS 4111/4114 (Nutrition and Disease I/II), and NFS 4021 (Contemporary Topics in Nutrition) can be taken for graduate credit if a member of the graduate faculty teaches them.

There are now accredited coordinated master's Programs that allow students from any BS/BA background who meet their admissions criteria and have the minimum prerequisite courses (these vary program-to-program, but may include Anatomy, Physiology, and Intro to Nutrition, Chemistry, Microbiology, and Lifecycle Nutrition). These programs are 3-4 years and include the DPD knowledge components, a master's degree, and the internship component in one package. As of July 2022, there are over fifty programs nationwide that are designed in this way. If you have questions about these programs, please see Dr. McKinley.

I have a non-nutrition-related undergraduate degree and want to become an RD; do I need to take another degree?

Most students do have an undergraduate degree in nutrition or dietetics, but “no,” you do not need one. To enter a dietetic internship, you need a degree in any subject and to meet the knowledge and competency requirements set by ACEND. Many internship directors believe that having a second degree in dietetics does not improve your chances of admission. However, if you are entering the DPD with no science background—no biology or chemistry—your estimated time to complete the program is three years. Many students find they have the time to take the two or three extra courses needed to complete a bachelor's degree in Dietetics. There are now accredited coordinated master's programs that allow students from any BS/BA background who meet their admission criteria and have the minimum prerequisite courses—these vary by program but may include Anatomy, Physiology, Intro to Nutrition, Chemistry,

Microbiology, and Lifecycle Nutrition. These programs span 3-4 years and combine the DPD knowledge components, a master's degree, and the internship in one package. As of July 2022, over fifty programs nationwide are designed this way. If you have questions about these programs, please see Dr. McKinley.

When and how do I apply for a supervised practice experience (dietetic internship)? Help is available to you through workshops and information posted online. This packet includes timelines and specific information on how to do this.

I want to transfer into the DPD at LSU. What courses will transfer?

It depends on whether you're transferring from another major at LSU or from another university to LSU. If you're coming from a different major, the courses you've completed will be applied to the College of Agriculture, but they might not meet our required courses. To see what you would need for Dietetics before joining the program, you can generate your degree audit for Nutritional Sciences, Dietetics.

If you're transferring into the DPD from another university, the College of Agriculture has specific guidance for you. The DPD or the DPD director does not control which courses transfer into LSU or how courses from another university will transfer; for example, you might have taken a public speaking course elsewhere, but it may not count as CMST 2060 here. Once accepted into LSU, students can consult with the department, including the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences, to reassess their transfer credits and determine if a course has an LSU equivalent or can be substituted. For example, a student transferring from another DPD might have a course called Community Nutrition and believe it covers similar content. To replace the Community Nutrition course, students must demonstrate that the course content is equivalent by providing a syllabus and class notes. If the instructor of our Community Nutrition course agrees, the substitution request will be forwarded from the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences to the Dean's Office. The final decision on substitutions rests with the Associate Dean, Dr. Rutherford, although all decisions are made in coordination with the course instructor. Another important note about transfer credits is that "courses taken at the lower (1000-2000) level cannot be given upper (3000-4000) level credit." This could be an issue if you're transferring from a junior college.

I have a degree in nutrition from a school that does not have a dietetics program; can you review my transcript and issue a verification statement that would allow me to enter a dietetic internship?

No. To receive a verification statement from LSU, students must take at least 12 hours here, including NFS 4111 and 4114 (Nutrition and Disease I/II).

I am a student at Southern University and want to utilize the Co-Op Agreement to take classes. Can I be issued a verification statement from LSU as an SU student?

No. You are more than welcome to utilize the cooperative agreement between LSU and Southern to take a class you qualify for (i.e., have prerequisite courses completed). Still, LSU cannot grant verification statements to students enrolled at another university. If you are a nutrition student at SU and want a verification statement, you would either transfer to an accredited DPD program (like LSU) or graduate from SU and go back to an accredited DPD to complete the necessary coursework.

Is there other information available on applying for internships?

When you take NFS 3025: Professionalism in Dietetics, you will be given everything you need for your applications to DIs. Register for this course, ideally, in the fall of your Junior Year.

If you have any other questions or concerns about the program or LSU, contact me, Dr. McKinley, email: emckinley1@lsu.edu as DPD Director; or your assigned advisor; or Ms. Barleycorn, the undergraduate coordinator, email: lbarleycorn@agcenter.lsu.edu; or Jennie Sparks, the Assistant Dean of Student Services in the College of Agriculture, email: jsparks2@lsue.edu.

We can give you better advice than your classmates about everything connected to your LSU experience.