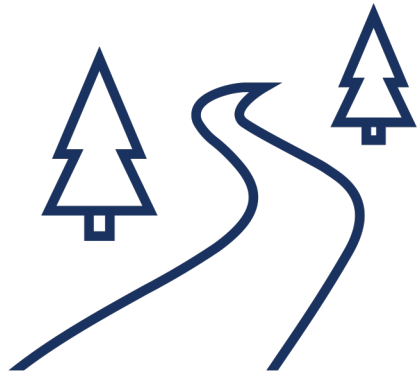


**Accreditation Council  
for Education in  
Nutrition and Dietetics**

**eat  
right.** the accrediting agency for the  
Academy of Nutrition  
and Dietetics



# THE PATH TO BECOMING A REGISTERED DIETITIAN NUTRITIONIST

JOAN S. FRANK, MS, RDN, FAND

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, DIDACTIC PROGRAM IN DIETETICS

UC DAVIS DEPARTMENT OF NUTRITION



# Careers4RDN.com

RDN / DN

Your career resource for all things nutrition & dietetics:

Dietetic Internships

Registered Dietitian Nutritionists

Degreed Nutritionists

Slides and Recordings under the UC Davis tab > Workshops

# Becoming a Registered Dietitian Fall 23

## Upcoming Events



Fall 2023

SEP  
28

### BECOMING A DIETITIAN

Brief overview of the process

OCT  
5

### APPLYING TO PROGRAMS

Application process overview

OCT  
12

### TYPES OF PROGRAMS

& Narrowing your list

OCT  
19

### DICAS APPLICATION PROCESS

Walk through DICAS

OCT  
26

### RESUMES

Bring your resume!

NOV  
2

### PERSONAL STATEMENTS

What to include

NOV  
9

### FINANCING GRADUATE SCHOOL

Comparing costs of DIs

NOV  
16

### RD CAREER PATHS

& specialty credentials

NOV  
30

### PROGRAM INTERVIEWS

What to expect/how to prepare

DEC  
7

### THE MATCHING PROCESS

How to rank programs

If you are planning on applying to  
Supervised Practice (SP) / Dietetic Internships (DI)  
in 2024, plan to attend these presentations!

MEYER  
3208  
1:10-2:00

All presentations are live,  
synchronous [Zoom](#), & recorded.

given by  
Joan Frank,  
MS, RDN, FAND  
Asst. Director,  
Didactic Program  
in Dietetics



## OVERVIEW

# WHAT IS AN RDN?

Registered dietitian nutritionists — RDNs — are the food and nutrition experts who can translate the science of nutrition into practical solutions for healthy living. RDNs use their nutrition expertise to help individuals make unique, positive lifestyle changes. They work throughout the community in hospitals, schools, public health clinics, nursing homes, fitness centers, food management, food industry, universities, research and private practice. RDNs are advocates for advancing the nutritional status of Americans and people around the world.





RD  
VS.  
“NUTRITIONIST”

# WHERE CAN A CAREER IN DIETETICS TAKE YOU?

- Clinical Nutrition\*
- Community Nutrition
- Public Health
- Food Service Management
- Nutrition Management
- Research
- Business & Industry
- Teaching
- Sports Teams
- Private Practice/Consulting
- Media
- Publishing

\*RD only – Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT)

ALSO: NDTR = Nutrition & Dietetic Technician, Registered



# JOB OUTLOOK



## Exhibit 2.11 Highest Incidence Positions – RDNs

Clinical Dietitian	19%
Clinical Dietitian, Specialist - Diabetes	3%
Clinical Dietitian, Specialist - Renal	7%
Pediatric/Neonatal Dietitian	3%
Nutrition Support Dietitian	3%
Outpatient Dietitian, General	4%
Outpatient Dietitian, Specialist - Diabetes	3%
Outpatient Dietitian, Specialist - Renal	3%
Clinical Dietitian, Long Term Care	6%
WIC Nutritionist	4%
Public Health Nutritionist	3%
Director of Food and Nutrition Services	3%
Private Practice Dietitian - Patient/Client Nutrition Care	3%

weighted base: 7,082 practicing RDNs  
See Exhibit 7.23 for supporting data



## Becoming a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist

### Educational and professional requirements

Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs) are food and nutrition experts who have met the following criteria and earned the RDN credential:

Effective January 1, 2024 - a **minimum of a master's degree** is required to be eligible to take the credentialing exam to become a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN)

- o **Completed a minimum of a bachelor's degree** at a U.S. regionally accredited university or college or foreign equivalent, and coursework through an Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) accredited Didactic (DPD), Coordinated (CP), Graduate Program (GP) or Foreign (FDE) program. For a list of accredited programs, see [www.eatrightpro.org/acend](http://www.eatrightpro.org/acend). Effective 1/1/2024, a master's degree will be required to take the Commission on Dietetic Registration RDN credentialing exam

- o **Completed required supervised practice/experience** through an ACEND accredited Dietetic Internship (DI), Coordinated (CP), Graduate Program (GP) or an Individualized Supervised Practice Pathway (ISPP) offered through an ACEND- accredited program. Information on ACEND- accredited programs at [www.eatrightpro.org/acend](http://www.eatrightpro.org/acend).

- o **Passed a national examination** administered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR). For more information regarding the examination, refer to CDR's Website at [www.cdrnet.org](http://www.cdrnet.org). In order to maintain the credential, an RDN must complete continuing professional educational requirements.



## 2 PATHWAYS TO THE RDN

# Becoming a RDN

### Pathway 1: Clinical Nutrition

UNDERGRADUATE DPD

and

DIETETIC INTERNSHIP + MASTER'S  
or  
COORDINATED GRADUATE  
or  
FUTURE GRADUATE

MASTER'S

and

DIETETIC  
INTERNSHIP

OR

### Pathway 2: Other Science Major

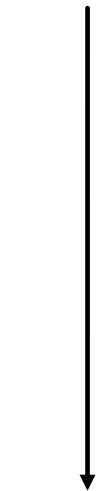
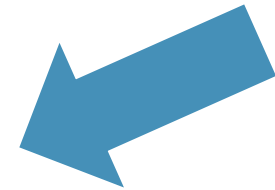
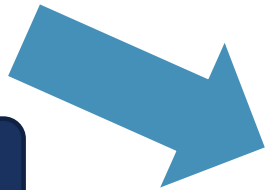
BACHELOR'S DEGREE & PREREQUISITES

and

COORDINATED GRADUATE  
or  
FUTURE GRADUATE

REGISTERED DIETITIAN EXAM

REGISTERED DIETITIAN NUTRITIONIST (RDN)



# ACADEMY OF NUTRITION & DIETETICS' ACCREDITED PROGRAMS DIRECTORY

- <https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/accredited-programs/accredited-programs-directory>
- Dietetic internships (with / without master's)
- Coordinated Graduate Programs (CP)
- Future Graduate Programs (FG)

## RESOURCES / WEBSITES

- Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics' *Accredited Programs Directory*
  - <https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/accredited-programs/accredited-programs-directory>
- UC Davis Department of Nutrition - Dietetic Internship Application Materials:
  - <https://nutrition.ucdavis.edu/academics/dpd/diet-intern-app-mats>
  - *Applicant Guide to Supervised Practice (2022)*
- Careers4RDN:
  - <http://Careers4RDN.com>



# DIETETIC INTERNSHIPS

# INTERNSHIP PROGRAM OPTIONS

- Graduate Level
  - M.S., M.A., MPH, MBA
- Stand Alone DI (requires Master's)
- Distance Internships
- Duration – 6-9 (with prior master's) to 24 months
- Concentration or focus – MNT, Community, Management, etc.
- Full-time vs. Part-time
  
- This is post-bacc training; most charge a fee/tuition

# WHAT DOES A FUTURE GRADUATE PROGRAM LOOK LIKE? UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC (16 MONTHS)

## Supervised Practice

- 10 weeks Acute/Post Acute Care
- 5 weeks Ambulatory Care
- 5 weeks Food Service/Systems Management
- 5 weeks Women's Health, Pediatrics
- 5 weeks Wellness, Innovative Nutrition Practice

## Clinical Nutrition MS

- 16 months (Aug 2023 – Dec 2024)
- Supervised Practice + Master's Coursework



# WHAT DOES AN MS/DI PROGRAM LOOK LIKE?

## CSU SACRAMENTO (21 MONTHS)

### Supervised Practice

- Clinical Dietetics
- Food Service Management
- Community Nutrition
- Outpatient Dietetics
- Concentration Areas:
  - Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
  - Advocacy and Public Policy

### Master's

- 21 months
- Year 1 = master's courses
- Year 2 = supervised practice



SACRAMENTO STATE



# WHAT DOES A DIETETIC INTERNSHIP PROGRAM LOOK LIKE?

## UCDMC = 52 WEEKS

### Supervised Practice

- 12 weeks Clinical Nutrition Core
- 4 weeks Critical Care Nutrition
- 4 weeks Pediatrics
- 11 weeks Ambulatory Nutrition
- 3 weeks Community Nutrition
- 6 Weeks Management
- 2 weeks Elective Experience
- 2 Weeks Staff relief
- 200 hours Didactics
- 1 week Vacation

# GOALS FOR NEXT 1-4 YEARS:

- Work hard academically
  - pay attention to KRDNs in your upper division nutrition courses!
- Obtain volunteer/internship/work experience
- Join SNA!
- Evaluate your goals
  - What experiences do you want from your DI?
  - What type of job do you want?
- Research internships
- Take the GRE (if needed – Jr/Sr Summer)
- Work on resume
- Assemble professional portfolio
- Attend Office Hours!

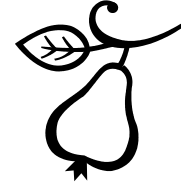


# Increasing Your Chances of being Accepted into a Dietetic Internship

Here are some tips to increase your chances to be accepted into an American Dietetic Association Dietetic Internship (DI) Program. There are 244 DI programs in the US and its' territories. Only 50% of applicants are matched with a DI. These tips don't guarantee a DI match, but they do increase the possibility of a match.

- ☞ Get involved in your school's nutrition/dietetic club
- ☞ Be active with other academic or social clubs that interest you. Not everything has to be directly related to dietetics. You can learn many applicable skills from experiences outside the field
- ☞ Volunteer in a clinical nutrition setting
  - A large portion of the DI is spent in clinical rotations, so it's important that you are exposed to this setting beforehand
- ☞ Volunteer or work in other nutrition settings, such as government, non-profits, research, etc.
- ☞ Work hard to receive high academic marks to keep your GPA competitive

☞ At least once per semester, meet with your Dietetic Academic Advisor to go over your Academic Plan



## ***Boost Your Chances for a DI***

- Be ACTIVE in your school's community and the larger community. Volunteer or work as much as you can (and still have a life) in the nutrition field.
- Work or volunteer experience outside of the nutrition field can still be beneficial to your application. The goal is to make those experiences apply to the nutrition field.



## ***Super Boost Your Chances for a DI***

- Keep track of all work and volunteer hours completed, as well as contacts for those activities.
- Having records on hand when completing the DI Application ensures that every hour that you spent learning will be included on the application.
- Official documentation isn't necessary, but accuracy of hours completed is crucial.
- For one-time events that will not be included on your DI application, still record the hours. This might remind you of an experience that you could include in your personal statement as an anecdote.

## **Quick Tips to Pick the Best DI for YOU**

- ★ If you aren't limited by location, look at all the DIs across the US (California DIs are very competitive!)
- ★ Begin your DI search the summer before you apply
- ★ Narrow your DI choices to no more than 15 before the school year begins and about 8 before Thanksgiving. The February deadline will be there before you know it!
- ★ E-mail questions to the DI director only after *thoroughly* reading their website. Also, have someone proof-read the e-mails to make sure that all your communication with the director is professional
- ★ Visit the DI, if possible

# QUESTIONS?

Joan Frank, MS, RDN, FAND  
Assistant Director – Didactic Program in Dietetics  
[jsfrank@ucdavis.edu](mailto:jsfrank@ucdavis.edu)

