



# Preceptor Handbook

Arkansas State University  
Dietetics Program



ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
*College of*  
Nursing & Health Professions

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome and Acknowledgements.....	1
Program Information.....	2
Dietetics Program.....	3
Coordinated Program Description .....	4
Dietetics Program of Study.....	5
Core Knowledge and Competencies for the RD.....	7
Student Role in Supervised Practice .....	14
Student Admission and Preparation.....	14
Responsibilities of A-State Students.....	15
Supervised Practice from a Student’s Perspective.....	16
Preceptor Role in Supervised Practice .....	17
Responsibilities of Preceptors.....	17
Responsibilities of Practicum Instructors .....	17
Benefits of Precepting.....	18
Handling Difficult or Problem Situations .....	20
Appendix A	
Excerpts from Dietetics Student Handbook.....	23
Appendix B	
Dietetics Preceptor Training Program .....	27
Appendix C	
Characteristics of Effective Preceptors Self-Assessment .....	28
Roles of An Effective Preceptor .....	31

## **Welcome to the Arkansas State University Dietetics Program!**

The faculty and staff of the Dietetics Program wish to offer sincere thanks to you for the significant contributions you make to our students, our program and the profession of dietetics. Without you, the preceptors, there would be no dietetic education programs to train future professionals. We recognize you perform your preceptor roles in addition to your other duties without extra pay or tangible rewards. Performing the role of preceptor takes valuable time away from demanding jobs and schedules. We applaud your professional commitment and are here to support your efforts.

Please contact us with any question, need, or issue, as we are a phone call or email away. We encourage you to share your thoughts and provide valuable ideas for program improvement.

Healthy regards to all,

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## **PROGRAM INFORMATION**

### **Dietetics Program**

The Coordinated Program in Dietetics at Arkansas State University is administered by the Dietetics Program in the College of Nursing and Health Professions. The program provides for the achievement of knowledge and performance requirements for entry-level dietitians through integration of classroom instruction with a minimum of 1,080 supervised practice hours. The supervised practice experiences occur in food service, community and clinical settings. The face-to-face program features a 'clinical' concentration, which allows students to build upon foundation knowledge and competencies for future proficiency in the clinical area of dietetics.

Students earn a Bachelor of Science degree in Dietetics upon completion of the required 126 hours. Students must then complete the master's degree. The Master of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics degree (MSND) consists of a minimum of 36 hours beyond the Bachelor's degree. The master's program is delivered online. Upon successful completion of the MSND, students are eligible to take the national credentialing examination administered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR). After passing the examination, they become registered dietitians.

In addition to registered dietitian credentialing, many states have regulatory laws for dietitians and nutrition practitioners. Frequently, these state requirements are met through the same education and training required to become and maintain status as a registered dietitian.

## **Program Mission**

The Dietetics Program at Arkansas State University seeks to meet the need for registered dietitians in the delta region and beyond by providing quality, equitable, and inclusive education and experiences for all students.

## **Program Goals and Objectives**

The successful graduate will:

1. Perform as a knowledgeable, competent entry-level dietitian.
  - a. \*At least 80% of program students complete program/degree requirements within 4.5 years (150% of the program length).
  - b. \*Of graduates who seek employment, 80 percent are employed in nutrition and dietetics or related fields within 12 months of graduation.
  - c. \*Eighty percent of program graduates take the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists within 12 months of program completion.
  - d. \*The program's one-year pass rate (graduates who pass the registration exam within one year of first attempt) on the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists is at least 80%.
  - e. \*Eighty percent of graduates working in dietetics will receive a score of "average or higher" for professional conduct when rated by employers on satisfaction surveys.
2. The program will promote diversity in the field of nutrition and dietetics.
  - a. Twenty percent of program graduates will be non-traditional, ethnic diverse, or gender diverse.

Outcomes data are available upon request.

\*Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) required objectives.

## **What is a Coordinated Program? How is it different from an internship?**

Arkansas State University's Coordinated Program in Dietetics (CP) started in 2012 as the only coordinated program in the state of Arkansas. The inaugural class consisted of five students who graduated in 2014. The program is attracting more highly qualified students each year.

A coordinated program integrates didactic (classroom) instruction with 1,080 hours of supervised practice experiences in the professional phase of the program. It takes three years to complete this program: three fall semesters, three spring semesters and two summers. This program is not an ISPP (Individualized Supervised Practice Pathway) nor an internship. Persons enrolled in the program are referred to as 'students' rather than 'interns' for this reason. The program is highly structured with students completing didactic courses concurrently with supervised practice experiences.

An internship occurs after all didactic coursework is complete and a degree is awarded to the student. Unlike an internship, students in a coordinated program complete supervised practice experiences while completing their coursework. Much thought and coordination goes into timing experiences to complement and reinforce the coursework. However, there may be times when a student will encounter a specific challenge that has not yet been taught or reviewed in the classroom. It is these circumstances that will require understanding and expertise on the part of the preceptor. It is perfectly acceptable to expect the student to refer to the Nutrition Care Manual and other professional food and nutrition resources to fill temporary 'gaps' in knowledge. These can be valuable learning experiences as the students take an active responsibility for their learning.

**Program of Study**  
**Degree: Bachelor of Science**  
**Major: Dietetics**

Students must complete all general education and prerequisite program requirements prior to starting the program. The following courses comprise the professional portion of the dietetics major.

Fall Junior Year			Spring Junior Year		
Prefix/#	Course Name	Hrs.	Prefix/#	Course Name	Hrs.
NS 3113	Life Cycle Nutrition	3	NS 3253	Nutrition Assessment	3
NS 3123	Nutrition Biochemistry	3	NS 4553	Nutrition Counseling	3
NS 3133	Food Service Management	3	NS 3263	The Nutrition Care Process	3
NS 3153	Food and Society	3	NS 3143	Food Science and lab	3
NS 3163	Nutrition Education	3	NSP 3213	Practicum I	3
	Total	15		Total	15

Summer 1 (5 weeks)		
Prefix/#	Course Name	Hrs.
NSP 3323	Practicum II	3
NS 3243	Quantity Foods	3
	Total	6
Summer 2 (5 weeks)		
NSP 4433	Practicum III	3
NS 4453	Community Nutrition	3
	Total	6

Fall Senior Year			Spring Senior Year		
Prefix/#	Course Name	Hrs.	Prefix/#	Course Name	Hrs.
NS 4413	Medical Nutrition Therapy I	3	NS 4523	Medical Nutrition Therapy II	3
NS 4442	Professional Development	2	NS 4533	Infant and Child Nutrition	3
NS 4443	Food Chemistry and Lab	3	CLS 4212	Interpreting Lab Data	2
NS 4463	Sports Nutrition	3	NS 4573	Introduction to Research	3
NSP 4544	Practicum IV	4	NS 4654	Practicum V	4
	Total	15		Total	15

Total Junior/Senior Hours 72

Total Degree Hours 126

**Program of Study**  
**Degree: Master of Science**  
**Major: Nutrition & Dietetics**

<b>Summer 5</b>			<b>Hours</b>
Summer I	NS 6253	Nutrition in Critical Illness	3
	NS 6113	Food and Nutrition Public Policy	3
Summer II	NS 6003	Topics in Food Service	3
	NS 6123	Health Care Delivery in the U.S.	3
Total			12

<b>Fall 5</b>		<b>Hours</b>	<b>Spring 5</b>		<b>Hours</b>
HP 5113	Leadership in Health Professions	3	NS 6013	Management of Nutrition Services	3
NS 6263	Advanced Medical Nutrition Therapy	3	NS 6243	Metabolic Nutrition	3
NS 6303	Nutrition and Dietetics Research	3	NS 6313	Nutritional Epidemiology	3
NS 6033	Data Analysis in Health Professions	3	NS 6843	Ethics of Health Care	3
Total		12	Total		12

Total Degree Hours 36



## **Coordinated Program Core Knowledge and Competencies for the RD**

During the three years of the CP, students will meet the competencies expected of dietetics students who progress to entry-level professionals. Students must successfully complete both the academic course requirements and supervised practice experiences in order to receive a Bachelor of Science degree. After January 1, 2024, once students complete the BS in Dietetics, they must also complete the MS in Nutrition and Dietetics in order to qualify to take the commission on dietetic registration exam.

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

#### Knowledge

Upon completion of the program, graduates are able to:

- KRDN 1.1 Demonstrate how to locate, interpret, evaluate and use professional literature to make ethical, evidence-based 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.

#### Competencies

Upon completion of the program, graduates are able to:

- CRDN 1.1 Select indicators of program quality and/or customer service and measure achievement of objectives.
- CRDN 1.2 Evaluate research and apply evidence-based guidelines, systematic reviews and scientific literature in nutrition and dietetics practice.
- CRDN 1.3 Justify programs, products, services and care using appropriate evidence or data.
- CRDN 1.4 Conduct projects using appropriate research or quality improvement methods, ethical procedures and data analysis utilizing current and/or new technologies.
- CRDN 1.5 Incorporate critical-thinking skills in overall practice.

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

### Knowledge

Upon completion of the program, graduates will be able to:

- 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 Practice for the Registered Dietitian Nutritionist and the Code of Ethics for the Profession of Nutrition and Dietetics.
- KRDN 2.3 Assess the impact of a public policy position on nutrition and dietetics practice.
- KRDN 2.4 Discuss the impact of health care policy and different health care delivery systems on food and nutrition services.
- KRDN 2.5 Identify and describe the work of interprofessional teams and the roles of others with whom the registered dietitian nutritionist collaborates.
- 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 bias, 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.

### Competencies

Upon completion of the program, graduates will be able to:

- CRDN 2.1 Practice in compliance with current federal regulations and state statutes and rules, as applicable, and in accordance with accreditation standards and the Scope of Practice for the Registered Dietitian Nutritionist, Standards of Practice, Standards of Professional Performance, and Code of Ethics for the Profession of Nutrition and Dietetics.

- CRDN 2.2 Demonstrate professional writing skills in preparing professional communications.
- CRDN 2.3 Demonstrate active participation, teamwork and contributions in group settings.
- CRDN 2.4 Function as a member of interprofessional teams.
- CRDN 2.5 Work collaboratively with NDTRs and/or support personnel in other disciplines.
- CRDN 2.6 Refer clients and patients to other professionals and services when needs are beyond individual scope of practice.
- CRDN 2.7 Apply change management strategies to achieve desired outcomes.
- CRDN 2.8 Demonstrate negotiation skills.
- CRDN 2.9 Actively contribute to nutrition and dietetics professional and community organizations.
- CRDN 2.10 Demonstrate professional attributes in all areas of practice.
- CRDN 2.11 Show cultural humility in interactions with colleagues, staff, clients, patients and the public.
- CRDN 2.12 Implement culturally sensitive strategies to address cultural biases and differences.
- CRDN 2.13 Advocate for local, state or national legislative and regulatory issues or policies impacting the nutrition and dietetics profession.

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

Knowledge

Upon completion of the program, graduates will be able to:

- KRDN 3.1 Use the Nutrition Care Process and clinical workflow elements to assess nutritional 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 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 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 client's/patient's needs.

### Competencies

Upon completion of the program, graduates will be able to:

- CRDN 3.1 Perform Medical Nutrition Therapy by utilizing the Nutrition Care Process including use of standardized nutrition terminology as a part of the clinical workflow elements for individuals, groups and populations of differing ages and health status, in a variety of settings.
- CRDN 3.2 Conduct nutrition focused physical exams.
- CRDN 3.3 Perform routine health screening assessments including measuring blood pressure, conducting waived point-of-care laboratory testing (such as blood glucose or cholesterol), recommending and/or initiating nutrition-related pharmacotherapy plans (such as modifications to bowel regimens, carbohydrate to insulin ration, B12 or iron supplementation).
- CRDN 3.4 Provide instruction to clients/patients for self-monitoring blood glucose considering diabetes medication and medical nutrition therapy plan.
- CRDN 3.5 Explain the steps involved and observe the placement of nasogastric or nasoenteric feeding tubes; if available, assist in the process of placing nasogastric or nasoenteric feeding tubes.
- CRDN 3.6 Conduct a swallow screen and refer to the appropriate health care professional for full swallow evaluation when needed.
- CRDN 3.7 Demonstrate effective communication and documentation skills for clinical and client services in a variety of formats and settings, which include telehealth and other information technologies and digital media.
- CRDN 3.8 Design, implement and evaluate presentations to a target audience.

- CRDN 3.9 Develop nutrition education materials that are culturally and age appropriate and designed for the literacy level of the audience.
- CRDN 3.10 Use effective education and counseling skills to facilitate behavior change.
- CRDN 3.11 Develop and deliver products, programs or services that promote consumer health, wellness and lifestyle management.
- CRDN 3.12 Deliver respectful, science-based answers to client/patient questions concerning emerging trends.
- CRDN 3.13 Coordinate procurement, production, distribution and service of goods and services, demonstrating and promoting responsible use of resources.
- CRDN 3.14 Develop and evaluate recipes, formulas and menus for acceptability and affordability that accommodate the cultural diversity and health needs of various populations, groups and individuals.

**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.**

Knowledge

Upon completion of the program, graduates will be able to:

- KRDN 4.1 Apply management theories to the development of programs or services.
- KRDN 4.2 Evaluate a budget/financial 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 and sanitation principles related to food, personnel and consumers.
- KRDN 4.6 Explain the processes involved in delivering quality food and nutrition services.

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

### Competencies

Upon completion of the program, graduates will be able to:

- CRDN 4.1 Participate in management functions of human resources (such as training and scheduling).
- CRDN 4.2 Perform management functions related to safety, security and sanitation that affect employees, clients, patients, facilities and food.
- CRDN 4.3 Conduct clinical and client service quality management activities (such as quality improvement or quality assurance projects).
- CRDN 4.4 Apply current information technologies to develop, manage and disseminate nutrition information and data.
- CRDN 4.5 Analyze quality, financial and productivity data for use in planning.
- CRDN 4.6 Propose and use procedures as appropriate to the practice setting to promote sustainability, reduce waste and protect the environment.
- CRDN 4.7 Conduct feasibility studies for products, programs, or services with Consideration of costs and benefits.
- CRDN 4.8 Develop a plan to provide or develop a product, program or service that includes a budget, staffing needs, equipment and supplies.
- CRDN 4.9 Explain the process for coding and billing for nutrition and dietetics services to obtain reimbursement from public or private payers, fee-for-service and value-based payment systems.
- CRDN 4.10 Analyze risk in nutrition and dietetics practice (such as risks to achieving set goals and objectives, risk management plan, or risk due to clinical liability or foodborne illness).

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

Knowledge

Upon completion of the program, graduates will be able to:

- 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 support, presenting an elevator pitch).
- KRDN 5.4 Practice resolving differences or dealing with conflict.
- KRDN 5.5 Demonstrate the ability to resolve conflict.
- KRDN 5.6 Demonstrate an understanding of the importance and expectations of a professional in mentoring and precepting others.

Competencies

- CRDN 5.1 Perform self-assessment that includes awareness in terms of learning and leadership styles and cultural orientation and develop goals of self-improvement.
- CRDN 5.2 Identify and articulate one's skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to the position desired and career goals.
- CRDN 5.3 Prepare a plan for professional development according to Commission on Dietetic Registration guidelines.
- CRDN 5.4 Advocate for opportunities in the professional settings (such as asking for additional responsibility, practicing negotiating a salary or wage or asking for a promotion).
- CRDN 5.5 Demonstrate the ability to resolve conflict.
- CRDN 5.6 Promote team involvement and recognize the skills of each member.
- CRDN 5.7 Mentor others.
- CRDN 5.8 Identify and articulate the value of precepting.

## **STUDENT ROLE IN SUPERVISED PRACTICE**

### **Student Admission and Preparation**

A selective admissions process is used to select the most qualified students for the Coordinated Program. Students apply for admission to the program in April of their sophomore year. If accepted, they must have completed the following prerequisites with a minimum grade of 'C' in all courses prior to entering the program in the fall:

- English Composition I and II
- College Algebra
- Human Anatomy and Physiology I and II and Labs
- Introduction to Psychology
- Principles of Sociology
- Fine Arts and Humanities Electives (6 hours)
- Fundamental Concepts of Chemistry and Lab
- Fundamental Concepts of Organic and Biochemistry
- Basic Human Nutrition
- Oral Communication
- Social Science Elective (3 hours)
- Statistics for Health Professionals
- Microbiology for Nursing and Allied Health and Lab

Once accepted, students complete the following requirements upon starting the program in the fall:

- CPR certification
- Certified Background Check
- Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics membership
- Local Student Nutrition and Dietetics Association membership
- Required immunizations including Hepatitis B and TB skin test
- Personal health insurance
- Student professional liability insurance
- HIPAA training



## **Responsibilities of A-State Students**

- Make initial contact with preceptor to determine time, location, dress code and parking for the first day.
- Prepare for and participate in all supervised practice activities. Assume responsibility for your own learning.
- Comply with all policies of the Dietetics Student Handbook.
- Comply with all policies and procedures of the facility.
- Refrain from making personal calls, texts, and emails while at the facility.
- Communicate regularly with preceptors regarding expectations, progress, questions and problem areas.
- Plan and organize assignments for the day and week. Take responsibility for accomplishing the learning objectives for the experience.
- Present necessary paperwork and evaluations to preceptor ahead of the deadline, to allow adequate time for review and signatures.
- Be willing to take some risks and stretch outside of personal comfort zone in order to grow and learn.
- Be respectful of knowledge and experience gained through professional practice.
- Realize that preceptors receive no extra pay or tangible rewards for working with students. They are simply volunteers who want to pay back to the profession.
- Be grateful for and receptive to both positive feedback and suggestions for improvement, as both can be helpful.
- Manage health and personal lives in order to be able to give the supervised practice experience your full focus and energy.

## **Supervised Practice from a Student's Perspective**

**I am not an intern.** As a student in a Coordinated Program supervised practice experiences, I can be anywhere in my professional program, from an entry-level first year student to my final semester of the second year. However, I am not done with my didactic program, as an intern would be. Thus, I may have gaps in my knowledge, and I hope that you will be understanding. I am here to learn. Feel free to provide supplemental learning material to facilitate my ability to function in your setting.

**I am not like your last student.** Students come from a wide range of backgrounds. Some of us are very young and inexperienced and have rarely worked before while others are pursuing second careers, are more mature and have a great deal of work experience. I might be very comfortable with patients or could need more exposure to develop confidence with patients. We come from a wide range of cultural and experience backgrounds that are sure to enrich your workplace.

**No matter who I am, this is all new to me.** Please be patient and encourage me to take risks in order to develop confidence. For the most part, every experience that I enter is a foreign environment. It is similar to starting a new job every couple of months! Please take the time to orient me to the physical environment and policies, and even to describe the culture at your particular facility.

**Share with me your “tips and tricks.”** Please let me learn from your experiences by sharing the “tricks of the trade” and techniques you have developed along the way. How do you manage time and work load? How do you handle difficulty situations? If a particularly good learning opportunity arises, please include me in it.

**Please remember that I am still in school.** We students are in supervised practice experiences and also have a full load of coursework to attend to during evenings and weekends. We are expected to be flexible and give you our full attention for the hours we have committed to, but additional hours beyond our experience requirements may be impractical given our course load.

## PRECEPTOR ROLE IN SUPERVISED PRACTICE

### Responsibilities of Preceptors

- Conduct a thorough orientation to the supervised practice setting.
- Meet with the student you precept on a regular basis.
- Permit students to shadow and learn from you
- Facilitate a positive professional learning environment.
- Provide opportunities for the student to practice what he/she has learned.
- Provide assistance and supervision as needed.
- Evaluate the student's progress through verbal and written evaluations.  
Let student and the practicum instructor know early in the rotation if the student is not meeting expectations so he/she can learn and adjust. Evaluation results should not be a surprise at the end of a rotation.
- Complete required supervised practice documentation in a timely manner.
- Be a positive role model.
- Participate in preceptor training: read preceptor handbook; complete preceptor online training (Appendix B), including self-assessment tool (Appendix C); attend university training sessions. Preceptor online training provides 8 CPEUs at no cost; visit [the training program](#).
- Privacy of student information: Preceptors must adhere to the Family Educational Right and Privacy Act (FERPA) which affords students certain rights in regard to their educational records. Consult the [undergraduate bulletin](#) for the complete policy.

### Responsibilities of Practicum Instructors

- Communicate any changes in procedures, curriculum, rotation descriptions or competencies/learning outcomes to preceptors and students.
- Monitor progress of students through the competency evaluation forms.
- Address any concerns raised by either preceptors or students in a timely manner.
- Conduct regular site visits with preceptors and students.
- Incorporate preceptor feedback into the program assessment process.
- Work with preceptors to develop alternatives and solutions to challenges and difficulties as they arise.

## **Benefits of Precepting: Positive Outcomes of Working with Students**

**HELP WITH WORK LOAD:** Students need to develop proficiency at gathering assessment data and doing the very things that can be the most time consuming for you. Once students are properly trained and oriented to your facility, they can be very helpful.

**A FRESH PERSPECTIVE:** A second set of eyes looking for the same things you do can provide additional information or a new perspective on a situation or problem. Students have very little prior history influencing their decisions and can often bring fresh creativity to the work place.

**UP TO DATE INFORMATION:** Nutrition knowledge is constantly evolving and growing with continuous research. Students have access to the most current information in the field. Although they lack experience, their didactic education is fresh and they can be a resource on developing topics as well. Allowing them to share their knowledge makes the student feel valued and builds confidence.

**FURTHER DEVELOP YOUR MANAGEMENT SKILLS:** Precepting requires many management skills, from time and project management to coaching and personnel development. If management is a personal career goal, this can be a very valuable learning experience for you.

**OPPORTUNITY TO GET A SPECIAL PROJECT DONE:** Use student case studies and projects to do an analysis or project that you have identified as important to your organization but haven't had the time or resources to complete. This allows the work to be a win-win situation for you and the student and can be rewarding as well.

**COMMUNICATE:** It is critical to communicate not only with the student, but with the Practicum Instructor and others in your organization regarding the student and their learning experience.

- Communicate regularly with your practicum instructor at Arkansas State University.
- Make sure others in your organization know the student is going to be there and what should and should not be expected of them.
- Communicate on a planned and routine basis with the student regarding the specific competencies they must achieve.

**ORIENT:** Providing a thorough orientation to the student saves you time and protects the student, the organization and your clients. As much as possible, make information available in writing so they can refer back to it.

- Provide a tour and maps of the facility, if necessary, along with hints for how to get around. Many organizations have HIPAA training and emergency action plan training. Be sure to pass this along to the student as well, although A-State has provided HIPAA training.
- Many organizations have an orientation that covers the mission and goals of the organization, plus policies and procedures. Providing an organizational chart with names, job titles and working relationships can also be helpful to understanding the function of a department or organization.
- Students must be oriented to security and technology such as phones, computers, copy machines, ID cards, etc.
- Make sure they know what they can use and what they cannot use, as well as where they can and cannot go.
- Finally, orient them to your job, resources to which you have access, office supplies, patient education materials and forms.

**CONTINUING EDUCATION HOURS:** The commission on Dietetic Registration allows for continuing education hours to be awarded for precepting students. One to three hours are awarded depending on the amount of contact time with the student. Forms may be found at <https://www.cdrnet.org/cpeu-credit-for-preceptors>.

## Handling Difficult or Problem Situations

It is always preferable to address the student directly with a reminder of clear expectations, before contacting the A-State Practicum Instructor. Remind the student of the expectation, and why it is important. Never ignore a problem and assume the student knows what is expected. If a student ignores a clear expectation that you have reminded them about twice, always contact the Practicum Instructor to describe the situation and share your concerns. The sooner we are aware, the sooner we can work on resolution. This information should never be a surprise to the student.

1. Absence or Tardiness. Absences from the supervised practice facility must be reported to the preceptor and the Practicum Instructor. The preceptor should be notified prior to the time the student is expected to be present; the Practicum Instructor should be notified shortly thereafter. It is not the responsibility of the preceptor to notify the Practicum Instructor that a student was absent, Students understand that they must accumulate a specific number of hours in each supervised experience and that all hours missed must be made up, at your convenience, including emergencies. Options must be acceptable to you and your schedule.

Absence and tardiness reflect poorly on the student's professional behavior and work ethic and may result in corrective/disciplinary action.

2. Emergency Absence. Students are expected to contact both the preceptor and the Practicum Instructor prior to the start time if they have an emergency and will be late or absent.

3. Inappropriate Dress. This may be the first time a student has ever dressed for a professional workplace. While we attempt to be as specific as possible regarding proper attire, some issues may need to be pointed out or reinforced.

4. Making personal phone calls, texting or sending personal email messages while at supervised practice facility. Students are instructed to use cell phones and electronic devices as a student resource (textbook or calculator) or as a phone only in case of family emergency UNLESS specified otherwise by the preceptor and/or individual facility policy. They should get your permission if they need to make a call due to an emergency. Generally, their full attention should be on their learning experience.

5. Negative, disrespectful or unprofessional behavior. Like any other behavior, clear expectations, timely correction and modeling appropriate behavior is the way to correct this behavior. Explain why it is important to behave in specific ways in certain circumstances. If you need help handling this type of behavior, discuss this with the Practicum Instructor.

6. Excessive knowledge gaps. You may wish to discuss the previous didactic coursework and background of the student. They simply may not have been taught certain material yet. However, if they are not recalling information that they have been taught, they will need to develop a plan to augment their knowledge and review material. It is not your job to teach this material; it is a good idea to contact the Practicum Instructor and get their assistance in helping the student with this plan. It is in the student's personal best interest to address these issues as well, as they will be attempting to pass the RD exam and become a competent entry-level dietitian at the completion of the program.

7. Personality conflicts. This usually is not a matter of the student doing anything wrong. On some RARE occasions, certain personalities simply do not mix. It is best to discuss this with the Practicum Instructor to see if any action is warranted or resolution can be reached.

A copy of pertinent Excerpts from the Dietetics Student Handbook is located in Appendix A of this document.

# APPENDIX



## **Excerpts from Dietetics Student Handbook Related to Supervised Practice**

### **Insurance Requirements**

All students are required to have health, automobile and professional liability insurance and provide documentation to the program director before beginning supervised practice rotations.

### **Travel**

In order to complete the supervised practice rotations in the CP, students may be required to travel to sites throughout northeast Arkansas, Missouri, Mississippi, and Tennessee. Some practice sites are located in the Jonesboro area or within a 75-90-mile radius of Jonesboro. Students must furnish their own transportation, which should be reliable and dependable, to and from these facilities and assume all costs and liability involved with this travel. Vehicle insurance is required as noted above.

Travel time to rotation sites does not count toward supervised practice hours.

### **Injury or Illness at Supervised Practice Sites**

Students who are injured or become ill during supervised practice will be sent to the Emergency Room or private physician as appropriate. Students are responsible for any financial expenses incurred, as well as health insurance to cover such emergencies and follow-up care as needed.

### **Drug Testing and Criminal Background Checks**

Students are required to undergo a drug test and criminal background check, if required by the supervised practice site. Students are responsible for any fees associated with these procedures.

### **Student Replacement of Employees**

Students do not replace employees for routine work responsibilities, unless staff relief is planned as part of the CP supervised practice experience to meet specific competencies. All preceptors should adhere to the rotation schedules and learning activities provided by the program director/practicum instructor.

## Professional Dress Code

Students are expected to dress in a clean, neat and professional manner at all supervised practice sites. This includes hair, nails and clothing. Students reporting for supervised practice in improper attire will be dismissed to change into proper attire. Time lost for this reason is considered absence time and make-up time is not available.

Proper attire at all supervised practice sites includes:

- Women: clean and pressed, white lab coat over scrubs or professional dress, blouse, skirt or slacks. Blouse/dress must have sleeves. Dress and skirt length should be no shorter than two inches above the knee. Jeans, shorts, t-shirts and exercise attire are not acceptable.
- Men: clean and pressed, white lab coat over scrubs, collared shirt, conservative tie optional, plain dark dress slacks, dark shoes. Jeans, shorts, t-shirts and exercise attire are not acceptable.
- Shoes: comfortable shoes in good condition that offer support and protection. Shoes are to be low-heeled and closed toes/heels, clean and polished. Tennis or sport shoes are not acceptable. Socks or hosiery must be worn.
- Jewelry: limited to engagement/wedding rings, watch and one pair earrings no larger than a dime.
- Hair: restraints must be worn in food service areas. Non-porous or metal hair ornaments are permissible. Facial hair must be neatly shaven; beards and moustaches must be neatly trimmed. Only natural hair colors are allowed.
- Food service rotations: slip-resistant shoes are to be worn. No jewelry, including watches and earrings, are allowed except for plain wedding bands (no stones).
- WIC rotations: no lab coat required, but if you stay cold, you may want one. Black scrubs are allowed in Mississippi WIC.
- Mission Outreach rotation: no lab coat required.
- Farmer's Market: jeans with no holes or stains, appropriate fit, A-State t-shirt OR plain black, red, or white t-shirt; shoes are to be closed toes/heels.
- Food Bank: no lab coat required.
- Health and Wellness Sites: capris (mid-calf) or workout pants allowed; no shorts of any length or leggings; A-State t-shirt or plain black, red, or white t-shirt; shoes are to be low-heeled and closed toes/heels, clean and polished; athletic shoes with socks (no tennis or sports shoes acceptable unless recommended by preceptor).
- Name tag: A-State ID badge and student name tag should be worn at all times, visible on the top left of lab coat or other clothing, if no lab coat is required.

Other rules related to personal appearance:

- Nails: must be trimmed to not extend past the tip of the finger. No nail polish or nail enhancement is allowed.
- Excessive make-up should not be used.
- Tattoos must be covered at all times.
- Visible body piercings (tongue, eyebrows, nose, etc.) are not allowed.
- No perfumes or colognes are allowed.
- Gum chewing and/or candy is not allowed.

## Professional Behaviors

Professional behaviors are those behaviors that are expected to be displayed at all times by students in the classroom, supervised practice settings and dietetics-related programs. Students who fail to exhibit these behaviors are subject to corrective/disciplinary action. See the Professional Behavior Evaluation Form available in the appendix of the handbook.

The following is a list of expected behaviors of dietetic students:

- Ethical performance in accordance with the Code of Ethics for the Profession of Dietetics
- Punctuality for class, supervised practice and other activities
- Completion of assignments within allotted parameters
- Positive relationship with peers, faculty, clients/patients, preceptors and staff
- Compliance with dress code in various settings
- Acceptance and incorporation of faculty feedback
- Adherence to guidelines stated in the Arkansas State University, CNHP and Dietetic Student handbooks
- No other behavior and/or attitude demonstrated which is considered to be unprofessional, disruptive and/or unethical

## Attendance

Supervised Practice: Absences from the supervised practice facility must be reported to the preceptor and the practicum instructor. The preceptor should be notified prior to the time the student is expected to be present. A student may not leave a supervised practice site during scheduled hours without notifying the practicum instructor.

Special requests to miss practicum must be submitted in writing to the practicum instructor at least one week in advance of the absence. Not all requests for absences may be approved. Personal business or routine appointments must be planned outside of practicum hours. Once the absence is approved by the practicum instructor, the student should make arrangements for make-up time with the preceptor. Any learning experience missed must be completed to the satisfaction of the preceptor and practicum instructor. Make-up time may be necessary during time that would be considered “off” days.

## Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

Cell phones and other electronic devices may be used as a student resource at the discretion of the faculty member and/or clinical site. Taking unauthorized photographs in clinical settings is strictly prohibited, as use of any personal electronic device to store/ enter any type of patient information is a violation of the Healthcare Information Portability Accessibility Act of 1996 (HIPAA).

Cell phones and other electronic devices may not be audible in the classroom. If your phone rings during class, you will be asked to leave and not return. Family emergency calls can be

routed through the departmental office. Personal texting in class is prohibited. Using devices to cheat on tests and papers is a violation of the Honor Code.

Violation of any of these policies may lead to a grade of F and/or dismissal from the program. Students violating the policy will be referred to the department chair. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner which promotes a collegiate learning environment. Behaviors and attitudes which disrupt the learning environment will not be tolerated.

## Dietetics Preceptor Training Program

- The Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics preceptor training web site is <https://acend-s-school.thinkific.com/courses/preceptor-training-course>
- Enrollment is free.
- You do not have to be a DTR or RD to use this training program.
- This is a FREE course with eight (8) CPEUs.
- There are 8 modules that include:
  - Preparing for your role as a preceptor
  - Planning for student learning
  - Facilitating student learning
  - Assessing student learning
    - Students like feedback, and they often identify it as one of the most important qualities of a good preceptor.
    - Students who receive regular feedback about their performance are likely to perform significantly better, develop better judgment, and learn faster than students who do not.
  - Communicating effectively
  - Managing your time
  - Keeping current
  - Discussions and preceptor advice on rotation activities
- You may download or print a certificate for your records.

## Characteristics of Effective Preceptors Self-Assessment

Instructions: First, read and rate yourself on each characteristic listed below by placing an “x” in one of the four rating boxes. Then, for each characteristic rated at sometimes or never, develop an action plan for how you will practice in these areas.

Characteristic	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never
<b>Is Organized and Focused</b>				
I pre-plan precepting learning activities				
I am prepared for precepting activities				
I am on time for precepting activities				
I take the time to explain concepts fully and clearly				
I am careful and precise in answering questions				
I summarize major learning points				
I focus on the identified learning objectives				
I identify what I consider most important				
<b>Values Student-Preceptor Interactions</b>				
I encourage discussion				
I invite students to share knowledge, experiences, and opinions				
I welcome and encourage questions				
I use eye-contact with my students				
I clarify thinking by identifying my reasons for questions				
I can tell if the student understands me or not				
I have interest and concern in the quality of my precepting				

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Always</b>	<b>Usually</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Never</b>
I encourage active learning, that is, the students are involved and engaged rather than simply observing				
<b>Is Dynamic and Enthusiastic</b>				
I am enthusiastic about my professional responsibilities, including precepting				
I vary the speed and tone of my voice				
I use humor appropriately with students				
I have an interesting style of presentation/teaching				
<b>Relates Well to Students</b>				
I have a genuine interest in students				
I respect students as persons				
I attempt to relate to students as individuals				
I adapt to the differences in individual students				
I am valued for advice beyond that directly related to the supervised practice experience				
I am accessible to students				
I am approachable and friendly				
<b>Uses an Analytical Approach</b>				
I discuss recent developments in the field				
I discuss points of view other than my own				
I share the origins of my ideas and concepts				
I provide references for interesting and involved points				
I explain why the student's work is correct or incorrect				

Characteristic	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never
I have students apply concepts to demonstrate understanding				
I provide constructive and timely feedback				
<b>Is Competent and Confident</b>				
I demonstrate mastery in the area in which I am precepting				
I keep up-to-date in the area in which I am precepting				
I am confident in my expertise in the area in which I am precepting				
I am confident in my skill as preceptor				
<b>Models Professional Behavior</b>				
I show respect for others				
I demonstrate empathy for others				
I take responsibility for my actions				
I recognize my own limitations				

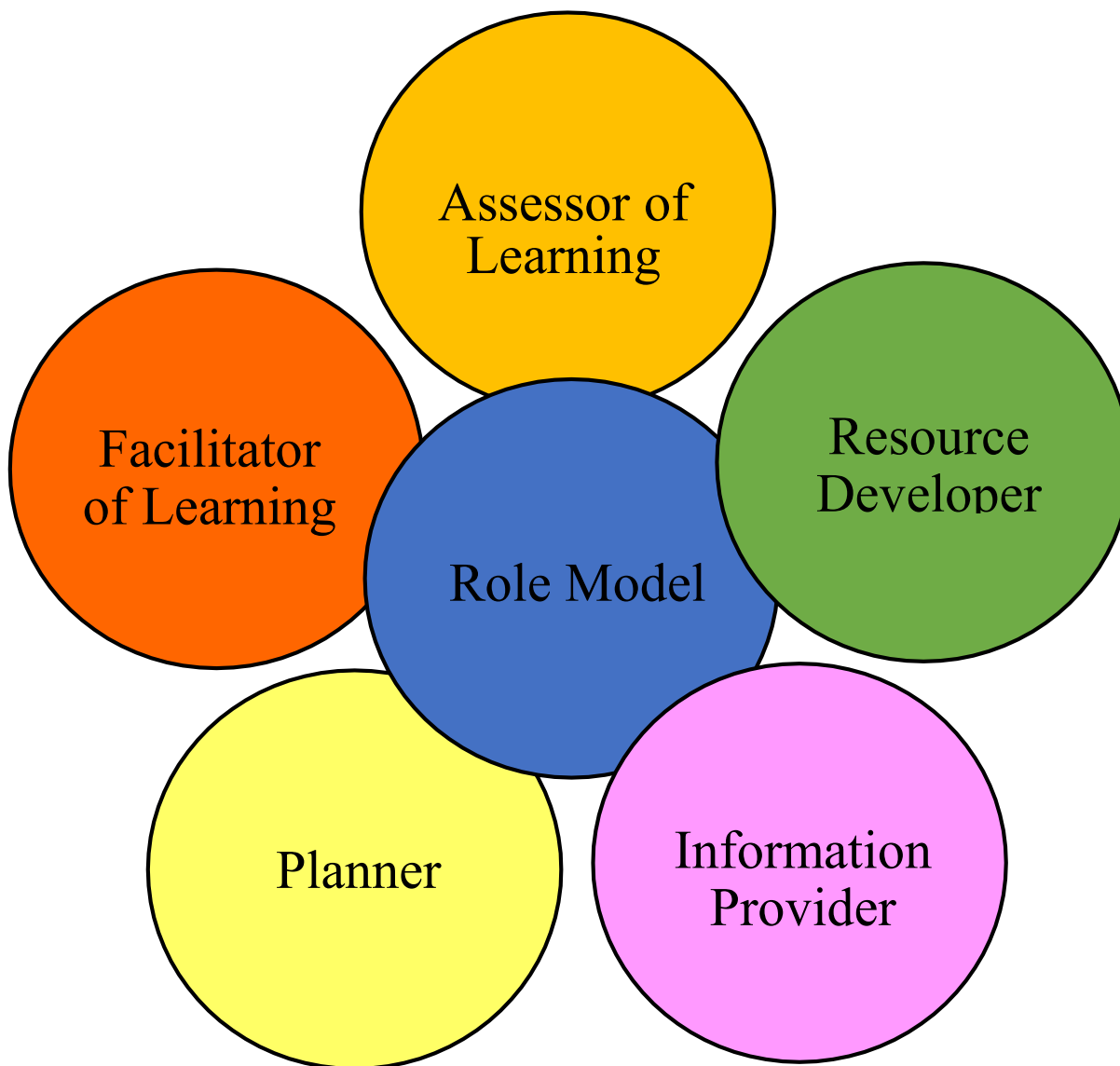
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From the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics: preceptor training web site is <https://acend-school.thinkific.com/courses/preceptor-training-course>



# Roles of an Effective Preceptor



Adapted from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Commission on Dietetic Registration Online Preceptor Training Program; available at <http://www.cdrcampus.com/>