

McNeese State University

Coordinated Program in Dietetics

Graduate Student Handbook

Master of Science in Nutritional Sciences



Harold and Pearl Dripps
College of Agricultural Sciences
2025-2026

Information provided in this handbook is subject to change and is supplemental to the McNeese State University Catalog and Student Handbook. Some information has been obtained from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics website.

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Application to the MSU Dietetic Internship

Application Fee

A nonrefundable \$50 application fee, payable to **MSU Dietetic Internship Program**, must be submitted as part of the application process.

Payment may be mailed to:

Dr. Elizabeth Moore
Harold and Pearl Dripps School of Agricultural Sciences
4380 Ryan Street, P.O. Box 92220
Lake Charles, LA 70609

To apply for the internship, applicants must submit the fee **and** complete the centralized application through the **Dietetic Internship Centralized Application Services (DICAS)**.

Admission Requirements

Admission to the **Master of Science in Nutritional Sciences with Integrated Dietetic Internship (Coordinated Program)** at McNeese State University is competitive and limited to applicants who meet the following criteria:

- **Bachelor's Degree:** Completion of a B.S. or B.A. from a regionally accredited institution.
- **ACEND-Accredited Coursework:** Successful completion of ACEND-accredited didactic coursework in nutrition and dietetics, documented by an official **Verification Statement** issued within the past five years.
 - A **Declaration of Intent** may be submitted if coursework will be completed prior to the program start date.
- **GPA Requirements:**
 - Minimum **overall undergraduate GPA of 3.0** on a 4.0 scale.
 - Minimum **3.0 GPA in DPD professional (core nutrition/dietetics) coursework**.
 - Minimum **3.0 GPA in DPD science coursework**.

Final acceptance is contingent upon receipt of the official DPD Verification Statement and the conferral of the bachelor's degree prior to the program start date.

Meeting minimum requirements does not guarantee admission.

Up to **ten internship positions** are available each academic year.

Application Process

Dietetic Internship Centralized Application Service (DICAS)

- All applicants must apply through **DICAS**, the centralized system used nationwide for Dietetic Internship applications.
Access DICAS at link: <https://dicas.cas.myliaison.com/applicant-ux/#/login>
- Applicants who have completed a bachelor's degree at a regionally accredited institution and ACEND-accredited coursework are eligible to apply.

Steps to Apply

- Submit a complete application through the DICAS portal.
 - There is no limit to the number of programs an applicant may apply to through DICAS.
 - If a program does not appear in DICAS, applicants should refer to that program's website or contact the program director for guidance.
- Applications to the MS in Nutritional Sciences with Integrated Dietetic Internship (Coordinated Program) must be submitted through DICAS.

Spring Application Deadlines

- Application deadline: February 15
- Admission decision notifications: No later than March 1
- Applicant response deadline: March 15
 - The program strictly follows ACEND policy and does not require or pressure applicants to respond before this date.

Contact Information

DICAS Support:

Phone: (617) 612-2855

Email: support@dicas.myliaison.com

General Questions About Dietetics Programs (ACEND):

Email: education@eatright.org

Application to McNeese's Graduate School

Students accepted to the Dietetic Internship must apply to and meet all requirements for admission to the McNeese State University Graduate School. **The application to the Dietetic Internship and the application to McNeese's Graduate School are two separate processes.**

Applications to the graduate school should only be initiated **AFTER** the applicant has been accepted into the Dietetic Internship.

Transcripts from all educational facilities attended must be sent to Graduate Admissions.

More information about the process of applying to the McNeese State University Graduate School can be found at <https://www.mcneese.edu/admissions/graduate/>. Alternatively, you may contact Graduate Admissions at (337) 475-5504 or admissions@mcneese.edu.

Please note that there is an application fee of \$20 associated with applying for the McNeese Graduate School. Failing to pay this fee will result in your application being discarded.

Admission's Policy and Compliance

Admission requirements, procedures, and consideration of applicants by the Internship Selection Committee will follow these and other university, state, and federal regulations. Admission policies shall protect student civil rights and comply with MSU's Equal Opportunity programs. The application of each student will be considered individually. "Admission to McNeese State University is based on academic preparation and ability. Only those students likely to succeed in our program are admitted. Admission decisions are made without regard to race, color, sex, religion, creed, national origin, marital status, disabilities, age, or (in the case of U.S. Citizens and permanent residents) financial need."

Anyone having questions or complaints regarding equal opportunity or needing reasonable accommodations should contact the Office of Special Services and Equity located in Smith Hall, Room 125.

Accreditation Status

The Combined Master of Science/Internship Program (MS/IP) is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) of The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

ACEND can be contacted at:

Accreditation Counsel for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190

Chicago, Illinois 60606-6995

OR

eatrightpro.org/acend

Program outcome measures are available to the public and prospective students upon request.

Program Description

McNeese State University (MSU) offers a combined Master of Science (MS) degree and Dietetic Internship (DI) that merges graduate coursework with supervised practice in one cohesive 18-month program. This structure allows students to complete both the academic and experiential requirements needed to become eligible for the Registration Examination for Dietitians, as administered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration.

Upon successful completion of all graduate coursework and supervised practice hours, students are issued a verification statement. This documentation confirms eligibility to sit for the Registration Examination for Dietitians.

Graduation and Program Completion Requirements

To successfully graduate from the McNeese State University Master of Science in Nutritional Sciences with Integrated Dietetic Internship (Combined MS/DI Program), interns must meet all of the following requirements:

1. Completion of Graduate Coursework

- Successfully complete 39 graduate credit hours as outlined in the program plan of study.
- Maintain good academic standing and meet all Graduate School academic requirements.

2. Completion of Supervised Practice

- Successfully complete a minimum of 1,000 supervised practice hours across required rotation areas, including:
- Medical Nutrition Therapy
- Community Nutrition
- Foodservice Management
- Nutrition Therapy and Health Promotion
- All supervised practice hours must be documented and approved in the Typhon Evaluation System.

3. Satisfactory Performance in Rotations

- Earn a minimum overall rating of 85% or higher on all supervised practice performance evaluations.
- Successfully complete all rotation assignments, projects, case studies, and professional activities as required by the program and preceptors.

4. Professional and Ethical Conduct

- Demonstrate professional behavior consistent with program expectations, facility policies, and the Code of Ethics for the Nutrition and Dietetics Profession.
- Comply with all university, program, and supervised practice site policies.

5. Resolution of Remediation or Disciplinary Actions

- Successfully complete any required remediation, supplemental work, or repeated rotations, if applicable.

- Have no unresolved disciplinary actions or grievances at the time of program completion.
- 6. Program Completion Timeframe**
- Complete all degree and supervised practice requirements within 2.25 years (150%) of the program length, as defined at the time of enrollment.
- 7. Verification Statement Eligibility**
- Upon successful completion of all program requirements, interns will be issued a Verification Statement, which qualifies graduates to sit for the Registration Examination for Dietitians administered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR).

Program Mission & Goals

Mission Statement of the MSU Dietetic Internship Program

The mission of the McNeese combined MS/DI Program is to provide a progressive and effective program that integrates graduate education, research, service, and supervised practice to develop competent, entry-level registered nutritionist dietitians.

Goals of the MSU MS/Dietetic Internship Program

Goal 1 Prepare graduates to become competent entry level registered dietitian nutritionists

- At least 80% of interns complete program requirements within 2.25 (150% of planned program length)
- Of graduates who seek employment, at least 80% are employed in nutrition and dietetics or related fields within 12 months of graduation
- At least 80% of program graduates take the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists within 12 months of program completion.
- 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%

Goal 2 Prepare graduates who demonstrate the ability to utilize current evidence-based research and apply the research process in professional practice.

- At least 75% of employers who respond to a survey on program graduates will rate them as above average in professional knowledge and skills as entry-level registered dietitians.

Program Contact

Director of Combined Dietetic Internship and Master's Program

ATTN: Elizabeth T. Moore, PhD, RDN, LDN

Gayle Hall 118

Box 92220

Lake Charles, LA 70609

(337) 475-5683

Emoore1@mcneese.edu

Program Costs

The Intern is responsible for paying the stated program fees by the specified dates. The Intern also assumes personal responsibility for living expenses throughout the entire program.

Listed below are the fees for the program:

- \$50 DICAS application fee (non-refundable)
- \$4,500 (in-state) and \$6,500 (out-of-state) per semester tuition fee
- \$1,000 Dietetic Internship fee; \$500 due at the beginning of first fall semester, \$500 due at the beginning of spring semester

Listed below are other expenses and approximate costs:

- Equipment (including scrubs, shoes, calculator, reference materials, etc.): \$250 – \$350
- Background check (Precheck) and 9-panel drug screen: \$90
- Typhon Evaluation System registration fee: \$90
- Health exam by physician of Intern's choice: \$40/varies
- Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics student membership: \$58

All fees are correct as of the date of printing/posting, but are subject to change. Costs for student housing, insurance, textbooks, and tuition vary based on a student's individual circumstances.

General Requirements for Interns

Vaccinations

The intern must have a health exam performed by a physician of their choice, and test negative for a 2-step Tuberculosis (TB) skin test and additional required medical tests before starting the program. If the intern does not pass the TB skin test, a physician at their expense must further evaluate them. Applicants with active Tuberculosis are ineligible for the Internship. The Intern must provide current immunizations and complete the MSU physical report form signed by a medical doctor (MD) before beginning any rotations. Proof of the following must be provided with the physical report form:

- Negative TB skin test
- Hepatitis B immunization
- MMR, Rubella, and Tetanus vaccinations
- Chicken Pox vaccination
- Yearly Influenza (Flu) vaccination
- Covid-19 vaccination (must have full course of shots)
 - Exemptions are allowed for most facilities but typically require additional precautions and testing leading up to rotation schedule at that facility and continuous safety precautions

Drug Testing and Background Checks

Sites request that background checks and drug screens be completed on Interns before starting at the site. The DI Director will set up the background check and drug screen with PreCheck (<http://precheck.com>), but the Interns are expected to contact PreCheck and cover the cost of the background check and drug screen. There may be times when the Intern may need to purchase more than one background check and/or drug screen. Admission into the Internship Program is contingent upon passing the background check and drug screen. Interns are required to have a negative drug screen test at orientation. Interns will go to sites approved by PreCheck for the drug screen. The DI Director will contact PreCheck for the results of the background check and drug screen. The results will be shared with facilities requesting background checks and drug screens. Any Intern with a positive drug screen will result in the Intern being excused from the DI.

Substances that will be tested for in the 9-panel drug screen*

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| • Amphetamines | • Methadone |
| • Barbiturates | • Opiates |
| • Benzodiazepines | • Phencyclidine |
| • Cocaine | • Propoxyphene |
| • Marijuana | |

*Note that testing for alcohol may also be added at the University's discretion.

Insurance

The Intern shall be responsible for providing proof of full personal health insurance coverage for program participation. Health insurance that includes only catastrophic coverage is not acceptable. Students shall also provide proof of automobile and professional liability insurance.

Medical Insurance

- The Intern is required to carry medical insurance throughout the entire program. Acquiring and maintaining medical insurance is the responsibility of the Intern. The Intern must show proof of medical coverage and submit a copy of the medical insurance coverage to the Internship Director on the first day of program orientation.

- Should the Intern be injured or ill at McNeese State University or at an outside affiliate rotation, the Intern's medical coverage would take effect to cover all costs. If the Intern's medical coverage does not cover the expenses, then the Intern is responsible for payment to the facility.

Car Insurance

- The Intern must provide their own transportation throughout the program, as Interns are responsible for transporting themselves both to and from various supervised practice rotation sites, occasional long-distance trips, and the university. The Intern must also carry automobile liability insurance throughout the program. The Intern is responsible for all liability for safety in travel to or from assigned facilities.
- On the first day of orientation, the Intern must submit to the DI Director a copy of their automobile liability insurance coverage. This insurance must be at a level to meet and/or exceed Louisiana insurance requirements.

Professional Liability Insurance

- Each Intern is responsible for purchasing Professional Liability Insurance prior to starting the combined MS/DI program (2,000,000 for one incident and 5,000,000 aggregate). The Intern must submit an application and fee to the insurance company before they begin their internship.
- It is mandatory that each Intern carry Professional Liability Insurance throughout the entire program. The cost of the coverage is the responsibility of the Intern. On the first day of orientation, the Intern must submit to the DI Director a copy of their insurance coverage.

Personal liability insurance is available from these companies for student dietitians:

<http://www.proliability.com/professional-liability-insurance/dietetic-practitioners/the-academy>.

The plan available to student dietitians is administered by Mercer Consumer and underwritten by Liberty Insurance Underwriters Inc., a member company of Liberty Mutual Group. Mercer Consumer has handled the insurance needs of individual healthcare professionals, schools, universities and associations since 1949. As a trusted name in the Professional Liability marketplace, Mercer Consumer has earned a reputation defined by superior products and quality services.

Academy Membership

The Intern is required to join the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and must provide the Program Director with proof of membership. The fees associated with membership are the responsibility of the Intern. On the first day of the Dietetic Internship Orientation program, the Intern submits to the Internship Director a copy of their Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Membership card.

Graduate Assistantships

A limited number of graduate assistantships for teaching assistants, laboratory assistants, non-teaching assistants, and research assistants are available to qualified graduate students across campus. Graduate students pursuing at least six hours of graduate work, enrolled in a graduate degree program, and in good academic standing may be eligible for a graduate assistantship. Assistantships shall be awarded on a semester basis with only a maximum of 1-1/2 assistantships per student. Specialized assistantships with the DI and DPD program directors and McNeese's Recreational Sports Complex do exist and may be available on a provisional basis to qualified dietetics interns. Students enrolled in thesis in progress only may be awarded an assistantship for a maximum of three semesters. Duties of the assistants are assigned according to the nature of the appointment, and the stipend varies with ability and preparation of the student and with the nature of the service.

Applications for assistantships should be addressed to the head of the department in which the student will do the major work.

Graduate students who are employed through the McNeese Human Resources Office to work as graduate assistants are allowed credit for half of the tuition portion of their fees and, if applicable, an out-of-state fee waiver.

General Dress Code Expectations

MSU Dietetic Interns are expected to maintain a professional appearance at all times during supervised practice and program-related activities. The following guidelines are intended to support appropriate clothing and grooming choices. Interns should select professional, conservative attire that is suitable for the practice setting. All clothing must be clean, neat, and free from excessive wrinkles. Any concerns regarding an intern's appearance will be addressed individually and privately by the Dietetic Internship Director.

General Dress Code Guidelines

- An MSU-issued identification badge must be worn at all times, with the name and photograph clearly visible.
- Makeup and jewelry should be conservative and appropriate to the practice setting. Jewelry must comply with facility policies; large or dangling jewelry should generally be avoided. Limited exceptions may be permitted at select community rotation sites.
- Hair should be neatly styled and conservative. Long hair must be secured, and hair restraints must be worn when required by the facility.
- Facial hair must be clean and well-groomed.
- Body piercings, other than those on the earlobe or nose, are not permitted during supervised practice. Jewelry in non-approved piercings must be removed during work hours.
- Visible tattoos are not permitted during supervised practice and must be covered with appropriate clothing.

- Perfume, cologne, and scented products are not permitted in patient care areas.
- Gum chewing is not permitted during supervised practice.
- Artificial nails are not permitted. Natural nails must be kept ¼ inch or shorter.
- For MSU campus functions, interns are expected to wear business casual or professional attire, as appropriate.
- During foodservice rotations, interns must adhere to facility-specific dress code requirements, including wearing closed-toed shoes with rubber soles in colors specified by the facility.

Specific Rotation Attire Recommendations

Acceptable Tops	Unacceptable Tops
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dress Shirts, of any sleeve length ○ Button-downs, of any sleeve length ○ Tank Tops, IF covered by a jacket or sweater ○ Other collared shirts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ T-shirts ○ Sheer or see-through tops
Acceptable Bottoms	Unacceptable Bottoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dresses ○ Skirts ○ Slacks ○ Khakis ○ Dress Capris 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shorts, of any kind ○ Jeans ○ Sweatpants ○ Leggings ○ Athletic wear
Acceptable Footwear	Unacceptable Footwear
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tennis shoes, unless otherwise stated by preceptor or facility guidelines ○ Closed-toed shoes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Open-toed shoes ○ Flip flops ○ Sandals

Time Commitments

The MSU Combined Master of Science in Nutritional Sciences/Dietetic Internship Program is an 18-month, full-time program that begins in the Fall semester (August) and concludes in the following Fall semester (December). The program consists of 39 graduate credit hours, including 12 credit hours of supervised practice/rotations, and approximately 1,000 supervised practice hours.

Supervised practice experiences comprise the majority of the program and include rotations in clinical nutrition, foodservice management/business, and community nutrition, with integration of the Nutritional Sciences concentration. The program also includes a one-week orientation for supervised practice conducted in August and January.

Supervised practice hours completed at rotation sites do not include travel time, outside preparation, or orientation activities.

Intern schedules are designed to best facilitate learning and may include early mornings, evenings, weekends, or variable hours, depending on the rotation and facility. A typical workday

is approximately eight (8) hours, and a full-time supervised practice week generally consists of 32 hours, based on the preceptor's schedule. Additional time may be required to complete assignments or projects associated with a rotation. Interns must not be used to replace staff or employees at any supervised practice site.

Professional Conduct, Work Expectations, and Performance Accountability

- The MSU Dietetic Internship is a post-baccalaureate program in which interns are expected to function in a professional role consistent with entry-level dietetics practice. Interns are expected to demonstrate professionalism in the quality and accuracy of their work, work ethic, communication, organization, and punctuality at all supervised practice sites.
- Professional performance is expected at all times during supervised practice experiences. Interns are responsible for confirming weekly rotation schedules with each assigned facility and for adhering to the expectations and standards established by preceptors and facilities.
- A typical intern workday is approximately eight (8) hours; however, daily hours may vary depending on the rotation and facility. A full-time supervised practice week generally consists of 32 hours, Monday through Thursday, based on the preceptor's schedule. Interns are expected to manage workload demands appropriately within the scheduled workday and demonstrate the ability to complete assigned responsibilities efficiently and independently as competence develops.
- Interns are responsible for contacting each assigned rotation site at least one week prior to the start of a rotation to confirm reporting time, assigned responsibilities, and directions to the facility. Preceptor contact information is available in the Typhon Evaluation System. Interns must notify both the Dietetic Internship Director and the assigned preceptor in advance if they will be absent, late, or unable to report as scheduled.
- Interns are responsible for learning and complying with the policies and procedures of each supervised practice facility, including but not limited to dress code, work hours, meal breaks, documentation standards, and patient confidentiality.
- Additional time beyond scheduled rotation hours may be required to complete assignments, projects, or learning activities associated with a rotation. Interns are expected to complete assigned work independently and outside of scheduled supervised practice hours as needed.
- Failure to meet professional, academic, or performance expectations—including workload management, completion of assignments, professional conduct, or adherence to facility and program policies—may result in performance concerns, remediation, or repeat of a rotation, as outlined in the program's Remediation and Disciplinary Policies. Performance concerns are addressed through timely feedback, documentation, and, when necessary, structured remediation to support intern progression while maintaining program and accreditation standards.

Courses and Credits

The students in the combined MS/DI will complete 39 hours of graduate course work, which will include 6 credit hours from the DI.

The Combined MS/Dietetic Internship Program is a four-semester program. Students will register for twelve credit hours per Fall and Spring semesters, 6 credit hours in the Summer semester, and 9 credit hours for the final Fall semester. Each student will complete approximately 1000 practice hours. Students must successfully complete all assignments in all rotations and receive a minimum score of 85% on their Performance Evaluation in order to receive a verification statement at the end of their degree and internship.

Supervised Practice

Interns in the MSU Combined MS/Dietetic Internship Program are placed in supervised practice sites located in Lake Charles and throughout Southwest Louisiana. Travel may be required to and from rotation sites and for other approved program activities, such as meetings, conferences, or short-term experiences designed to meet specific competencies. Interns are solely responsible for transportation and liability for travel to and from supervised practice sites. Rotation assignments are made after acceptance into the MSU MS/DI Program.

Supervised practice rotations are scheduled by the Dietetic Internship Director to ensure interns complete a minimum of 1,000 supervised practice hours across required rotation areas. Interns receive a tentative master rotation schedule during orientation. While every effort is made to maintain the schedule and consider intern requests, adjustments may be necessary due to unforeseen circumstances. The Dietetic Internship Director has final authority over rotation scheduling decisions.

Medical Nutrition Therapy

Includes introductions to the application of medical nutrition therapy in hospitals and long-term care settings. The curriculum is focused on practice-related learning experiences with supervised practice in nutritional assessment and the planning and implementation of nutrition care plans in diverse populations. Course work may include: clinical assessment forms, case studies, special project assignments, professional and oral presentations, and the reading of professional literature.

Community Nutrition

Includes the application of methods for dietary and anthropometric assessment of population groups in supervised practice settings. The curriculum is focused on the application of policies, public programs, and resources available to address the nutritional needs of a community in public health agencies, community health agencies, hospitals, professional worksites, and extension settings through preceptors. Course work may include: special assignments, worksheets, oral presentations, program development, and the reading of professional literature.

Foodservice Management

Includes supervised practice in the procurement, production, quality assurance, sanitation, and fiscal implications of hospital foodservice. The curriculum is focused on practice-related learning experiences in the development of menus for target populations, management of fiscal resources to meet budgetary guidelines, and the performance of human resource functions to meet organizational goals and objectives through preceptors. Course work may include worksheets, special assignments, planned theme meals, in-service presentations, professional oral presentations, educational material development, professional literature review, and journal review.

Nutrition Therapy and Health Promotion

Includes supervised practice in the role of diet and nutrition in health promotion and disease prevention and management. As the role of nutrition in health promotion, disease prevention, and disease management becomes an increasingly important public health issue, it is important that students learn how to apply these principles in their other supervised practice locations.

Educational Purpose of Supervised Practice

Supervised practice is a critical aspect of dietetic education. The purpose of supervised practice is to provide an opportunity for the Intern to explore dietetic practice by developing the knowledge and skills needed to practice in the profession. Rotation site experiences are for educational purposes only, and Interns are NOT to be used to replace employees.

Supervised Practice Documentation

Intern practice documentation will be entered into the Typhon Evaluation System (<https://typhongroup.com/>). Hours for supervised practice are entered into Typhon by the dietetic Intern per rotation. Preceptors are notified by Typhon to approve/disapprove hours entered by each Intern. If the preceptor does not approve hours, the preceptor list reasons for non-approval. Hours will be entered for each Intern for the entire duration of the Internship. The Program Director will monitor the documentation of hours throughout the supervised practice rotations and verify that the Intern completes the required hours for the MSU MS/DI program.

Assessment of Intern Learning and Performance

Intern learning and performance are assessed on an ongoing basis throughout the program using the Typhon Evaluation System, an electronic platform utilized by the Dietetic Internship Program to document supervised practice activities and evaluations. Interns are required to create and maintain an active Typhon account at their own expense (approximately \$90) for the duration of the program.

Through Typhon, interns are responsible for logging supervised practice hours for each rotation and completing required evaluations and assignments. Preceptors use the system to review, approve, and evaluate intern performance at the completion of each supervised practice rotation using standardized evaluation tools. Informal feedback may also be provided by preceptors throughout the rotation to support learning and professional development.

The Dietetic Internship Director regularly reviews intern evaluations, supervised practice hour documentation, and overall progress within the Typhon system to ensure interns are meeting program competencies and requirements. Interns are notified promptly of any performance concerns identified through the evaluation process and are provided with guidance, remediation, or additional support as needed to promote successful progression in the program.

Clinical Rotation Structure and Progression

Interns are provided with a tentative rotation schedule at the start of the internship. The schedule is structured to reflect a progressive learning model, with Clinical I completed during the fall semester and Clinical II completed during the spring semester.

Intern placement at specific clinical and community rotation sites is based on site availability, capacity, and scheduled dates. As interns progress through the program, they are expected to demonstrate increased competence, independence, and professional judgment. During the spring semester, preceptors typically observe greater skill development and readiness for more advanced responsibilities compared to the fall semester.

At larger clinical rotation sites, interns may complete a sequenced progression of practice areas within the same facility to support skill development. For example, an intern may begin in a lower-acuity setting such as rehabilitation, progress to specialty areas such as surgery or oncology, and conclude the rotation in higher-acuity areas such as the intensive care unit, as appropriate to the site and preceptor structure.

Intern Compensation

Dietetic interns enrolled in the McNeese State University Combined Master of Science in Nutritional Sciences/Dietetic Internship Program do not receive monetary compensation for supervised practice experiences. Supervised practice hours are educational in nature and are completed to meet program and accreditation requirements. Interns may not receive supervised practice hours while simultaneously working for pay at a facility where they are completing supervised practice experiences.

Summary of Courses and Supervised Practice by Semester

Semester	Graduate Course/SP Rotation	Credit Hours	Area	Weeks (32 Hours each week)	Minimum Supervised Practice Hours per semester
Fall	AGRI 604 NFSC 610 NFSC 603 NFSC 604	12 graduate credit hours	MNT	13	300
Spring	AGRI 606 NFSC 606 NFSC 608 NFSC 620	12 graduate credit hours	MNT	13	300
Summer	NFSC 602 NFSC 630	6 graduate credit hours	Community Management	6	100
Fall	NFSC 605 NFSC 607 NFSC 640	9 graduate credit hours	Community Management	13	300
Totals		39		45	1000

Friday Class NFSC 610/620/630/640

In addition to each week's supervised practice hours in various facilities, an in-person class will be held by the Dietetic Internship Director on Friday from 10am to 12pm. All students must attend this class, which is an instructional course covering diverse subject areas relevant to the practice of dietetics. Any Intern unable to attend class day for whatever reason must contact the Internship Director immediately as soon as it is determined there will be an absence for class day.

Classes will generally consist of: updating patient case logs, discussions of case studies or experiences from the previous week of rotations, and planning community projects and other community outreach programs as opportunities arise.

Vacation/Time Off

Vacation for the Interns will align with the traditional time off that is allotted to students after the end dates of the spring, summer, and fall semesters. Thus, it is imperative that vacations are planned outside of semesters to prevent unnecessary time conflicts. If a vacation or other time off must happen (as in the case of a wedding or funeral), first contact the Dietetic Internship Director. If the DI Director approves the vacation, then contact one's current preceptor to notify them of the situation and to schedule a make-up date(s). Please note that Friday is not an acceptable date for make-ups, unless class is not being held for whatever reason.

If an illness or injury arises that prevents the Intern from attending their rotation, the Intern must contact their preceptor and inform them of the length of absence required for recovery and to schedule the dates when their make-ups will be held. The intern is also responsible for letting the Dietetic Internship Director know of the absence.

Dietetic Internship Core Competencies for the RDN 2022 Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND)

Interns will complete the following competencies during supervised practice and course work.

	Domain 1. Scientific and Evidence Base of Practice: Integration of scientific information and translation of research into practice
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 nutrition and dietetics practitioner level of practice.
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 Client Services: Development and delivery of information, products and services to individuals, groups and populations.
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 ratio, 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.
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	Engage in 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.
CRDN 5.1	Perform self-assessment that includes awareness in terms of learning and leadership styles and cultural orientation and develop goals for 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 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.

Rotation Performance Concerns, Remediation, and Repeating a Rotation

MSU Dietetic Interns are required to successfully complete each supervised practice rotation. An intern may be required to complete remediation or repeat a rotation if performance is determined to be unsatisfactory by the preceptor and the Dietetic Internship Director. Unsatisfactory performance indicates that the intern has not demonstrated the expected level of competence required for progression in the program.

Identification of Performance Concerns

Performance concerns may arise in any supervised practice setting and may include, but are not limited to:

Clinical Rotations

Difficulty managing workload expectations; incomplete or inaccurate nutrition assessments; inappropriate or ineffective nutrition interventions; insufficient clinical reasoning; or inability to apply the Nutrition Care Process at the expected level of competence.

Foodservice or Community Rotations

Incomplete or insufficient completion of assigned tasks or projects; failure to meet operational or managerial expectations; or inadequate application of course objectives.

Preceptors are encouraged to provide ongoing feedback to interns throughout the rotation. When concerns are identified, preceptors typically communicate with the Dietetic Internship Director prior to completing a final evaluation to discuss the intern's performance and determine appropriate next steps.

Procedure for Remediation and Repeating a Rotation

If an intern does not successfully complete a rotation, the following procedures apply:

The Preceptor and Dietetic Internship Director review the evaluation and determine whether the intern must complete supplemental (remedial) work or repeat the rotation.

If supplemental work is required

1. The remedial requirements are documented on the Evaluation Addendum for Supplemental Work form by the preceptor and/or Internship Director.
2. The intern must complete the assigned supplemental work to the satisfaction of both the preceptor and Internship Director before progressing to the next rotation.
3. Upon successful completion, the preceptor reevaluates the intern on the skill areas identified for improvement, and a revised final rating is issued.
4. If the intern does not successfully complete the supplemental work, the Internship Director will require the intern to repeat the rotation.

If the intern is required to repeat the rotation

1. The requirement to repeat the rotation is documented on the Evaluation Addendum for Supplemental Work form by the Internship Director.
2. The intern must complete the repeated rotation to the satisfaction of the preceptor and Internship Director before progressing.
3. Upon successful completion, the preceptor reevaluates the intern on the identified competency areas and issues a revised final rating.
4. If the intern does not successfully complete the repeated rotation, the intern may be subject to disciplinary action or termination in accordance with program policies. A supervised practice rotation may be repeated only once.

Program Commitment to Retention and Support

The Dietetic Internship Program is committed to supporting intern retention and successful program completion. When academic or professional performance concerns are identified, the program provides timely feedback, remedial instruction, supplemental assignments, or additional support as appropriate. Retention decisions are made in accordance with established program and university policies to promote intern success while maintaining program integrity and accreditation standards.

Disciplinary Action

The Intern may be subject to disciplinary counseling by any preceptor at any time during the program year when the Intern does not abide by the Combined MS/Dietetic Internship Program or McNeese State University policies, procedures, or rules of conduct. The specific disciplinary action is based upon which rule of conduct was violated and whether previous warnings were given for the same behavior. Certain serious offenses are cause for immediate termination.

Procedure for Disciplinary Action

- The preceptor speaks to the Intern within two (2) scheduled working days of the occurrence.
- The preceptor documents the subsequent discussion and a copy of the documentation is given to the Internship Director.
- The Internship Director makes the Department Head aware of the disciplinary violation.
- The Internship Director files all written disciplinary violations in the Intern's file.
- After an Intern receives one disciplinary violation, the Internship Director meets with the Intern to discuss the problem(s).
- After three disciplinary violations, the Internship Director and the Department Head determine if the disciplinary actions warrant the termination of the Intern from the combined MS/DI Program.
- After each subsequent disciplinary action, the Internship Director and Department Head meet with the Intern to discuss the problem(s). The Internship Director and Department Head determine after each subsequent disciplinary whether the Intern should be terminated from the Program.

- The Internship Director documents each meeting with the Intern and the final results of the meeting. All documentation of these meetings is kept in the Intern's file.
- The Code of Student Conduct and the Policy on Academic Integrity (outlined at <https://www.mcneese.edu/policy/student-handbook/>) are incorporated as part of the Disciplinary Policy for the combined MS/Dietetic Internship Program. They are intended to supplement the above-listed procedures and apply to all Interns.

Termination

The Intern can be terminated from the program at any time due to problems in the Intern's behavior or performance. It is at the Internship Director's discretion to determine if the Intern should be terminated. Termination is based on written documentation of the Intern's behavior and/or performance. When an Intern is terminated, the termination is immediate.

Procedure for Termination

- The Internship Director reviews each Intern's evaluation form for each rotation. Any unsatisfactory evaluation, along with other documentation (e.g., disciplinary violations) is reviewed with the preceptor who rated the Intern unsatisfactory.
- If the Internship Director and the preceptor determine that termination is warranted, then they meet and discuss the decision with the Intern.
- If the Intern does not agree with the termination, they may follow the Grievance Policy and Procedure.
- If the Intern accepts the decision to terminate without filing a grievance, the Internship Director writes a summary of the decision.
- The Intern signs the summary and the summary is filed in the Intern's file. The Intern terminates immediately.
- If the Intern files a grievance and the grievance committee determines that the Intern should terminate, then the Internship Director writes a summary of the proceedings. Each member of the committee signs this document. A copy goes in the Intern's file.
- The Intern terminates immediately. If the Intern files a grievance and the grievance committee determines that the Intern should remain in the program, the Internship Director writes a summary of the proceedings. This summary is then signed by each member of the committee. A copy goes in the Intern's file. The Intern resumes their usual schedule.

Grievance Policy and Procedure

The Intern has the right to file a grievance if they feel they have not been treated fairly. It is important that all Interns feel that they have been fairly treated and given every opportunity to discuss their problems in the program. Resolution of disagreements between Dietetic Interns and precepting faculty are to be pursued in good faith at the highest levels of professionalism. The procedure set forth below is designed to guide this process in the most professional manner.

In order to file a grievance, the Intern must supply

- the act, omission, or matter which is the subject of the complaint;
- all the facts the Intern believes are relevant to the grievance;
- the resolution sought;
- all arguments in support of the desired solution;
- AND the grievance must be filed no later than one week after the act that is the subject of the Intern's complaint

The Department Head shall meet with the Internship Director to review the grievances privately. If a grievance is dismissed in whole or partially, the Intern filing the grievance shall be informed and given a concise written statement of the basis for the dismissal. A decision to dismiss a grievance is final and is not subject to appeal. If the Department Head determines a grievance to be appropriate for a hearing, the Dean shall be informed. The Dean shall convene a hearing board within fifteen days thereafter. The time may be extended for good cause at the discretion of the Dean.

The *Student Grievance Procedure* (located at <https://www.mcneese.edu/policy/title-ix-grievance-procedure/> or <https://www.mcneese.edu/policy/unclassified-grievance-complaint-policy/>) is incorporated as the Grievance Policy for the Combined MS/Dietetic Internship Program and applies to all Interns.

General Procedures

- Before filing a grievance, the Intern must make a good faith effort to resolve the issue with the precepting facility/preceptor involved.
- If a resolution cannot be reached, the Intern may present their case to the Internship Director. The Internship Director shall attempt to mediate the dispute, and if a mutually acceptable resolution is reached, the case is closed.
- If all or part of a grievance remains unresolved after this meeting, the Intern may meet with the Department Head for the Dripps Department of Agricultural Sciences. If a mutually acceptable resolution is reached, the case is closed.
- If the Intern, the Internship Director, and the Department Head do not reach a resolution to the dispute, then the Intern will meet with the Dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences. If a mutually acceptable resolution is reached, the case is closed.
- The Dietetic Internship Program maintains written records of all formal complaints filed by interns and preceptors, including documentation of the complaint, actions taken, and final resolution. Complaint records are retained for a minimum of seven (7) years.

- Retaliation against any intern or preceptor for filing a complaint or participating in the grievance process is strictly prohibited. Any act of retaliation will be addressed in accordance with university and program disciplinary policies.

After a Grievance has been filed

- The Dietetic Internship Director shall immediately notify the Department Head of the timely grievance. A copy of the grievance and all relevant material shall be provided.
- The Internship Director shall make a complete written response to the Department Head within one week of receipt of a grievance.
- A copy of the preceptor's response shall be sent to the Intern filing the grievance.
- The Department Head may request further written information from either party.
- The Department Head shall review the case to determine if a formal hearing is warranted Department Head.
- All or part of a grievance shall be dismissed if it is concluded that the grievance is:
 - untimely or premature,
 - based upon a frivolous matter,
 - insufficiently supported,
 - being concurrently reviewed in another forum,
 - previously decided pursuant to this or any other review procedure,
 - OR filed in bad faith

Filing Complaints with the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND)

For those in the Nutrition and Dietetics program, the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) will review complaints that relate to a program's compliance with the accreditation/approval standards. ACEND is interested in the sustained quality and continued improvement of dietetics education programs but does NOT intervene on behalf of individuals or function as a court of appeal for individuals in matters of admission, appointment, promotion or dismissal of faculty, staff, or student. A copy of the accreditation/approval standards and/or ACEND's policy and procedure for submission of complaints may be obtained by contacting the Education and Accreditation Team at The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics at 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190 Chicago, Illinois 60606-6995. To file a complaint a student can visit the Eatright.org website at [Filing a complaint \(eatrightpro.org\)](http://eatrightpro.org) and submit a Complaint Submission Form. Please note the policy for filing a complaint and the submission of a required signature by the complainant. Anonymous complaints are not investigated.

Withdrawal and Refund of Tuition

The Intern may withdraw at any time from the program. Withdrawal is immediate. The Intern cannot return to the program after withdrawal. The Intern is responsible for contacting the DI Director to withdraw from the Combined MS/DI Program.

The deadline for dropping a course or resigning from the University is approximately 75 percent into the semester. The date appears in the University Calendar, in the schedule of classes, in the University Online Catalog (<http://www.mcneese.edu/catalog>) and on the University website (www.mcneese.edu). Refunds will only be issued for graduate courses and per MSU policy. The Program Fee is non-refundable after matriculation into the MSU combined MS/DI Program. The Graduate credits will be refunded per MSU policies. Interns will follow the McNeese State University requirements for withdrawal and refund of fees.

Procedure for Withdrawal:

- The Intern writes a letter to the Internship Director informing them of the withdrawal and the reason for withdrawal.
- The Internship Director meets with the Intern to discuss their decision.
- After the discussion, if the Intern decides to remain in the program, the Intern resumes their usual schedule.
- The Intern writes on their original letter that they decided to remain in the program. The Intern and Internship director sign and date the letter. The letter is filed in the Intern's file.
- After the discussion, if the Intern decides to withdraw from the program, the Intern withdraws immediately.
- The Intern and Internship Director sign and date the original letter of withdrawal. The letter is filed in the Intern's file.

Refund Schedule for Registration Fee:

The date that a student officially resigns from the University determines whether or not fees will be refunded. The schedule refers to calendar days (including weekends) beginning with the first day of classes, as designated in the official University calendar. The refund policy and drop dates apply to off-campus courses, as well as on-campus courses. The University will be unable to provide fee refunds for at least four to eight weeks following the first day of classes during the fall and spring semesters. In the summer session, the University will be unable to provide fee refunds for at least two to four weeks.

Fall and Spring Semesters

If the student resigns:	The percent of fees refunded will be:
Through the last day of late registration	100 percent minus \$10
Through the 14 th day	80 percent
15 th through 21 st day (end of August/January)	60 percent
22 nd through 28 th day	40 percent
29 th through 35 th day	20 percent
After 35 th day (mid-September/February)	There is no refund of fees for resignation

Summer Semester

If the student resigns:	The percent of fees refunded will be:
By June 7	100 percent minus \$10
By June 8 – June 12	80 percent

By June 13 – June 15	60 percent
By June 16 – June 19	40 percent
By June 20 – June 22	20 percent
After June 22	There is no refund of fees for resignation

Records or Privacy

Interns have the right to review their own program records, including evaluations and documentation maintained in their intern file, in accordance with university policies. Requests to review records must be submitted to the Dietetic Internship Director and will be accommodated within a reasonable timeframe.

Evaluation Addendum for Supplemental Work

If the Dietetic Intern did not successfully complete the rotation (as defined on the rotation evaluation form), this addendum should be completed indicating required supplemental work.

Rotation and Preceptor: _____

Dietetic Intern: _____

Supplemental Work Required:

Assignment	Date Completed	Observed by (please sign)

Supplemental work must be completed to the satisfaction of the preceptor and Internship Director before proceeding to the next rotation. When supplemental work is successfully completed, the preceptor will re-evaluate the dietetic Intern on the skill categories that were identified for improvement. A re-evaluated final rating will be given at that time.

Signature of Intern _____ Date _____

Signature of Preceptor _____ Date _____

Signature of Internship Director _____ Date _____

At time of successful completion of supplemental work:

Signature of Intern _____ Date _____

Signature of Preceptor _____ Date _____

Signature of Internship Director _____ Date _____

Intern's Agreement

I have read the above rules and the Internship policies and procedures fully understanding their significance. In addition, I agree to satisfactorily complete the requirements and abide by the policies of both the University and sponsoring Facility as stated. Should I not meet these requirements, I will not receive the Verification Statement of Program Completion and will, therefore, be ineligible to take the Dietetic Registration Examination. Once I complete all requirements stated above, I will receive my verification statement of Program Completion and be eligible to take the Dietetic Registration Examination. With my signature, I attest that I am at least 18 years of age and competent to sign this Agreement.

Intern's Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____