

# Dietetics

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## Department Information

- **Department Location:**  
E. Morrow Lebedeff Hall
- **Department Phone:**  
701-231-7474
- **Department Web Site:**  
[www.ndsu.edu/hnes/undergraduate\\_programs/dietetics/](http://www.ndsu.edu/hnes/undergraduate_programs/dietetics/) ([http://www.ndsu.edu/hnes/undergraduate\\_programs/dietetics/](http://www.ndsu.edu/hnes/undergraduate_programs/dietetics/))
- **Credential Offered:**  
B.S.
- **Official Program Curriculum:**  
[catalog.ndsu.edu/undergraduate/program-curriculum/dietetics/](http://catalog.ndsu.edu/undergraduate/program-curriculum/dietetics/) (<http://catalog.ndsu.edu/undergraduate/program-curriculum/dietetics/>)

## Background Information

North Dakota State University has enjoyed a long-standing reputation in food and nutrition. Since 1925, NDSU has educated dietitians who are active nationwide in the profession of dietetics and leaders in professional organizations. The undergraduate program in dietetics is one of the finest in the nation. There are two undergraduate dietetics options at NDSU—the dietitian education program (DEP) with a concentration in community and sports nutrition, and the didactic program in dietetics (DPD).

A registered dietitian is a dietetic practitioner who has completed at least four years of college and earned a Bachelor of Science degree from an accredited program, as well as completing 1,000 hours of supervised practice. To become registered, a dietitian must pass a national registration examination. Dietitians are required to update their knowledge in continuing education during their careers. Beginning in 2024, all new dietitians entering the workforce will also be required to hold a master's degree.

## Dietitian Education Program Option - Selective Admission

### Accelerated BS/MS in Dietetics and Nutrition

The Accelerated BS/MS in Dietetics and Nutrition combines the required 1,000 hours of supervised practice with a Bachelor of Science in Dietetics and a Master of Science in Exercise Science and Nutrition. The accelerated program offers a concentration in community nutrition or sports nutrition. Students graduate at the end of five years with the necessary preparation to take the Commission on Dietetic Registration exam based on the 2024 standards. Students will complete a 3-phase application for this program. Students apply to the dietetics option by January 1 of year 2 (sophomore year), petition the graduate school the summer after year 2 (sophomore year) to apply to the accelerated option, and complete a graduate school application in the fall of year 3 (junior year). The Graduate Registration Exam (GRE) is NOT required for application. Students begin the program during the spring of year 3 (junior year). Acceptance to the program is limited. Transfer students are highly encouraged to contact the department early on for information if they intend to transfer to NDSU and enter the accelerated program. Applicants must have a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.5 with a 2.75 science GPA. The Accelerated BS/MS in Dietetics and Nutrition is accredited by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND).

### Didactic Program in Dietetics - Selective Admission

The DPD includes all academic course requirements of the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND). Graduates earn a Bachelor of Science degree in dietetics. The application deadline is January 1 of the sophomore year. Applicants must have a minimum GPA of 3.0 with a 2.75 science GPA. Students accepted in the DPD should be aware that in order to become a Registered Dietitian they must complete an internship (DI), and should have a minimum 3.25 cumulative GPA. If the GPA is lower than that, it is less likely a student will be accepted into a DI. Work experience, volunteer or paid, in healthcare food service, or some other type of nutrition or community experience will enhance a student's chance to receive a DI. A student is eligible to take the registration examination to become a registered dietitian following successful completion of a DI. Dietetic internships are available across the United States and range in length from six to 12 months. Beginning in 2024, all new dietitians entering the workforce will also be required to hold a master's degree in addition to completing the DPD and DI. This program is also accredited by ACEND.

## Additional Information

### Career Opportunities

Dietitians are employed in facilities such as hospitals, clinics and long-term care, providing nutrition therapy as well as foodservice administration. Dietitians work in various fields including high school, college, and professional sports, in business as sales or educational professionals, for commercial and government establishments, or in community or clinical settings and public health. Some registered dietitians work for food commodity groups such as the Dairy Council or Wheat Commission. Dietitians work in education by teaching dietetics, nutrition and foodservice management in colleges, universities, medical schools and public school systems. In community settings, dietitians provide counseling and nutritional

services for city and county health departments, older American feeding programs, child care centers, school foodservice programs and in retail settings like grocery stores. Dietitians also work in wellness centers, hospitals and consulting positions as part of the health promotion team.

The practice of dietetics is continuously changing as more research is conducted on foods and on the role of food in human health. Many dietitians work in hospital settings, either in clinical management or nutrition therapy as clinical dietitians. Clinical dietitians who work in nutrition therapy assess the nutritional needs of patients, plan menus, recommend or prescribe diets and nutritional support for patients, consult with physicians and direct educational programs on nutrition and special diets. They are members of the interdisciplinary team both in healthcare and wellness facilities.

## **Career Outlook**

Placement surveys conducted in the Department of Health, Nutrition, and Exercise Sciences at NDSU show that more than 90 percent of the dietetics graduates obtain employment in their field within four months of graduation. It should be pointed out that employment is most favorable outside of Fargo. In recent study, it was projected there will be a continued demand for dietitians in both traditional and nontraditional areas for years to come. During college, many opportunities are available for students to obtain experience in the field. Some of those opportunities are offered through multiple healthcare facilities such as acute care hospitals and nursing homes, foodservice in a variety of venues, and public health service.

## **Academic Advisement**

The Department of Health, Nutrition, and Exercise Sciences prides itself on giving individual attention and advisement to each student. A faculty advisor is assigned to each dietetics major. The academic advisor helps students set goals for their college work, helps them choose courses and encourages them to seek community work experience during their college career. In addition to the academic advisor, each incoming freshman and transfer student is assigned a student advisor to help with routine questions and to give assistance in adjusting to college life.

## **High School Preparation**

Students interested in dietetics should have a background in the natural sciences and mathematics. Strong communication skills, both oral and written, is an advantage to students considering dietetics.

## **Scholarships**

Numerous scholarships are available through the College of Human Sciences and Education and the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Contact the department for more information or visit: [https://www.ndsu.edu/hse/student\\_resources/hde\\_scholarships/](https://www.ndsu.edu/hse/student_resources/hde_scholarships/)