

# Masters of Dietetics and Nutrition Graduate Student Handbook

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Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program

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# Master of Dietetics & Nutrition

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## **Introduction**

### **Purpose & Audience**

This handbook outlines the requirements for students in the professional Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program at The Ohio State University. It is a companion volume to the [School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences Student Handbook](#), [School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences Graduate Handbook](#), and the University's [Code of Student Conduct](#). It provides additional expectations established specifically for students in the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Programs. It is intended for Ohio State University graduate students admitted to the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program. This handbook is revised annually and the most recent edition replaces all previous editions. The Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program reserves the right to implement revised or newly created policies at any time it determines them to be necessary.

### **Guiding Principles**

#### **Mission**

The Masters of Dietetics and Nutrition, in conjunction with available expertise from the university and surrounding community, prepares high caliber, creative and resourceful Registered Dietitian Nutritionists for current and future practice through didactic and supervised practice courses consistent with the Standards of Education for Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

#### **Vision**

The MDN is an educational program within a land-grant university offering a liberal education in the field of dietetics supported by diverse faculty and practitioners. Together we are committed to providing a broad-based education steeped in the science, arts and humanities; furnishing collaborative and interdisciplinary experiences in a variety of practice settings; and embracing new technology and standards in modeling professional practice.

#### **Goals**

The MDN proposal is being submitted with the following goals:

1. The Ohio State University will continue to be a leader in dietetics education by submitting a program revision that will meet the standards and competencies of the new model for dietetics education set forth by Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND)
2. The Ohio State University will provide a unified dietetics program between Medical Dietetics and Human Nutrition, eliminating internal competition for resources and confusion regarding duplicative dietetics education programs on the Ohio State campus. Confusion about the structure and the pathways for students to become RDNs have been expressed by the public, profession, and students.

## The Dietetics Profession

Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs) are food and nutrition experts. Their field combines the study of food, nutrition and health in relation to proper diet and food choices. RDNs assess nutritional status and recommend foods or medical nutrition products to treat diseases or help individuals reach optimal fitness and health. They offer nutrition education for groups and provide nutrition counseling for people of all ages. RDNs may manage foodservices in health care settings, schools, or congregate feeding sites. They may provide direct patient care in hospitals, long term care, or community settings. RDNs may also work with athletes, fitness clubs, employee wellness programs or home health agencies. Some dietitians work in commercial settings such as food outlets or grocery store chains; others are employed in industry. Opportunities for employment are varied. Some graduates join the Peace Corps and others enlist for military service. Many graduates combine the dietetics profession with medicine, nursing, physical therapy, pharmacy, occupational therapy, business, or other graduate professions.

### Educational Program Overview

The Medical Dietetics Division of the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences (SHRS) initiated a Coordinated Undergraduate Program in September of 1961, with financial assistance from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. This program was the first of its kind offering professional didactic education and the clinical experiences in dietetics in conjunction. Human Nutrition in the Department of Human Sciences has conducted an internship program since 1989. Both programs bring a strong history of dietetics education. This Future Education Model Graduate program leads to the degree of Master of Dietetics and Nutrition and eligibility to sit for the national registration examination offered by the Commission for Dietetic Registration (CDR). The Ohio State University's program is fully accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND).

### Length and Structure

The Master of Dietetics and Nutrition program is designed for students who have completed a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution as well as the pre-requisites to pursue a career as an RDN or students who have completed an ACEND-accredited didactic program in dietetics (DPD). Students with a verification statement from an accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics degree may enter the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program, with the prerequisites considered met. Students will complete five semesters of coursework as well as the supervised practice rotations and the requirements for the graduate degree to ultimately earn a Master of Dietetics and Nutrition degree.

### **Program Admission**

Admission to the MDN program is separate from admission to the university, and the admission process is selective and competitive. A formal application must be submitted no later than the posted deadline via the online application process at the [Graduate and Professional Admissions](#) website. Eligibility for admission is dependent on the completion of specified pre-requisite courses. Each spring, potential candidates are invited for a holistic interview and successful students are admitted to the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program. There are a limited number of students admitted to each

class and this is dependent on accreditation guidelines. Details about program admissions including pre-requisites, process, timeline and transfer applicants can be found at <https://hrs.osu.edu/academics/graduate-programs/master-of-dietetics-and-nutrition/admissions>

#### Advising & Scheduling - See SHRS Handbook

Advisors are assigned to these students during initial University Orientation, upon transferring into SHRS from another unit at the university, or upon transfer admission from another university. Please see the SHRS handbook for additional information regarding Academic Support Services. Professional phase students are advised by a faculty member from Medical Dietetics or Human Nutrition with additional consulting from the SHRS Student Services office on an “as needed” basis. Faculty advisors are assigned upon professional program admission.

Advisors provide guidance to students in planning their program of study; however, students are ultimately responsible for planning and completing all required coursework and supervised practice outlined in this handbook. Students should make an appointment to meet with their advisor at least once each term. Prior to registration for each term, students are expected to prepare or update a proposed plan of study as well as a proposed schedule that they review and refine with their advisor.

Advising includes much more than course scheduling and students are encouraged to develop strong mentoring relationships with their advisor.

Students in the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition program are initially advised by the one of the Co-Directors of the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program. When the student progresses to their graduate project, their graduate project advisor becomes the graduate advisor until graduation from the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program.

#### Graduation Requirements                      See SHRS Handbook

For Coordinated Graduate Students to earn the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition, students must:

- complete all University degree requirements (See School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences Handbook);
- complete all Master of Dietetics and Nutrition course requirements with a 3.0 or better (see the coursework section of this handbook);
- meet all Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Accreditation Council for Education of Nutrition and Dietetics competencies as documented by completion of the competency portfolio at the end of each supervised practice rotation and academic courses;
- complete at least three semesters of full-time enrollment at the Ohio State University
- be enrolled in the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program at the time of graduation;
- maintain a minimum cumulative point-hour ratio (GPA) of 3.0 for all coursework completed at Ohio State

Refer to the HRS Student Handbook for procedures regarding degree audits, credit evaluations and the applications to graduate.

### Retention and Good Standing

Students shall be considered to be in “good standing” in the professional phase of the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program when they are compliant with the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program’s academic, safety and capability, and professionalism requirements and are not currently on warning or probation nor have been dismissed from the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program or university.

### University Level Sanctions

The University has established university-wide student conduct guidelines in their [Code of Student Conduct](#). The university also has established a system of academic performance sanctions that include warning, probation, and dismissal as described in [Faculty rules 3335-9-25 thru -28](#).

### School /Program Sanctions

The Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program has established a reputation for producing professional, highly-trained practitioners. Student behaviors are expected to reflect these ideals in the classroom and in supervised practice rotations. Behaviors that do not meet these expectations will be addressed according to established policies and procedures (See SHRS Handbook Policy 1, 6,7,10). In addition to the university sanctions, the SHRS has also established academic and professionalism policies and sanctions for students in the School specifically outlined in the [SHRS Student Handbook](#). Students face sanctions for violations of academic policies, professionalism policies or a combination of both.

### Professional Sanctions

SHRS policies establish that any student whose professional behavior, conduct, competence, or interpersonal skills are judged unsatisfactory may be placed on professional warning, probation or recommended for professional disenrollment (dismissal from the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program). **Please see the SHRS handbook (Policies 1,6,7,10) for details of the process.**

- **ACEND Accreditation Standards complaints:** 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. A copy of the accreditation standards and/or the policy and procedure for submission of complaints may be obtained from the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program Director or by contacting the ACEND staff as follows:

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Accreditation Council for  
Education in Nutrition and Dietetics  
120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000  
Chicago, Illinois 60606-6995  
Phone: 1-800-877-1600, ext. 4872

### ***Appeals***

Students may appeal specific grades, academic or professional sanctions through processes described in the *SHRS Student Handbook (See SHRS Policy 5)* and the university's *Code of Student Conduct*.

### **Documentation Tracking**

#### E-Value

The Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program uses a secure online software package called [E\\*Value](#) to track a variety of student information including compliance with documentation, clinical supervised practice hours tracking, and clinical supervised practice evaluations. Upon program admission, students are issued an E\*Value account and login information. A variety of items necessary for supervised practice eligibility are tracked through this account and instructions for uploading these items is provided to students at their program orientation and is also available on the home screen of E\*Value.

#### Verification statement procedures - CDR for eligibility for the RD examination

Each student who has successfully completed all requirements for graduation will receive seven official copies of the verification statement. The Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program Director will then complete all required processes according to Registration Eligibility Processing System Guide to submit each student's eligibility forms to the Commission on Dietetic Registration. One copy of the verification statement and the CDR forms will be kept on file in the student's permanent record for any future need.

### **Health and Physical Capability (see also HRS Student Handbook)**

#### Technical Standards

The Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program is rigorous and intense and places specific requirements and demands on the students enrolled in the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program. The Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program partners with the university's Office of Disability Services to explore and implement accommodations where appropriate. If a student's physical, emotional or mental capability changes while in the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program, an amended Technical Standards Certification must be submitted. It is possible that a loss of capability may render a student unable to continue in the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program.



## Communicable Diseases

### Guidelines for Students Who Become Ill (See SHRS Policies 18,19)

Students who are ill could place their colleagues and patients at risk and should not attend class or clinical supervised practice until cleared to do so by a physician. Students who have a fever, contract a serious or communicable disease during the course of the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program must immediately seek appropriate medical care and may not return to classes or clinical supervised practice until at least 24 hours after the fever has broken and they have been cleared to return by a physician or based on specific public health guidance.

Students are responsible for notifying the Clinical Coordinator, their instructors and preceptors of illnesses. Medical care is available to students through the Wilce Student Health Center on campus or through a provider of the student's choosing.

### Positive Status for HIV, HBV, and/or HCV

Students who are positive for Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and/or who have chronic Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) and/or Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) are required to have regular follow-up with their health care provider.

Students may have limitations placed on the clinical supervised practice sites to which they may rotate depending on the decision of the receiving health system. Students will be expected to have detailed attention to universal precautions. In the case of Hepatitis, students will also be counseled about the risk of exposure to hepatotoxic materials. Students will also be counseled on the potential implications of their status for career selection.

Clinical environment participation of students chronically infected with HBV, HCV and/or HIV will be determined in accordance with SHEA guidelines (Current Version: [Infect Control Hosp Epidemiol 2010; 31\(3\):203-232](#)). In accordance with these guidelines, students are required to obtain viral burden titers every 6 months. HBV, HCV and/or HIV status communication is required for students rotating at outside institutions. It is the student's responsibility to inform attending medical staff at each hospital or institution about their positive status.

### Caring for Patients with Infectious Diseases

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Hepatitis B (HBV) are serious health problems in the United States. There has also been an increase in the number of patients with tuberculosis infections. In regards to patient care, professional students may not refuse to assist in the treatment of a patient solely because the patient is infected with HIV, HBV, or other infectious disease.

### Blood Borne Pathogen Exposure (See SHRS Policy 15)

Blood borne pathogen exposure is specific eye, mouth, other mucous membrane, non-intact skin or

parenteral contact with blood or other potentially infectious material. Students exposed to a blood borne pathogen during the course of the educational activities or assigned clinical supervised practice should immediately perform appropriate wound care including washing / flushing the area thoroughly, follow the post-exposure plan for the facility, and notify the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program of the incident.

After immediate wound care and washing with a disinfectant, the student should at least perform the following:

- Seek immediate medical care at the OSU Wilce Student Health Center or a nearby Emergency Department
- Document the route and circumstances of the exposure
- Document the source (person) of the potentially infectious material (if known)
- Notify the source's physician to request that the source submit to blood tests for infection. OSU Student Health can assist with this process.
- Make an appointment to be seen at the Preventative Medicine clinic at the OSU Wilce Student Health Center (call 614-292-4321 for appointments).
- Notify the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program Director
- Students and/or their health insurance provider are responsible for costs associated with any treatment provided to them. The Associate Dean for Student Life in 155 Meiling Hall may help with any "uncovered" expenses that result after insurance payment. Students are encouraged to meet with Associate Dean and bring remaining bills.

### LIABILITY INSURANCE

Professional phase students have liability protection through a blanket liability insurance policy provided by the College of Medicine at no direct cost to the student. This policy provides coverage to students, instructors and preceptors during coursework and assigned clinical supervised practice. This policy only covers classroom and supervised practice activities that are assigned by the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program. This policy also provides for medical and personal injury coverage in the event that a student is injured during a clinical supervised practice experience.

### LIABILITY FOR SAFETY IN TRAVEL

The student is responsible for their own liability and safety during travel to and from assigned supervised practice sites, field trips, and to and from Ohio State for supervised practice. In the event that the student's car becomes disabled or involved in an accident during supervised practice, they should look to their personal safety first. The student should make arrangements for their car and/or transportation, as needed. As soon as practical, contact the site supervisor and either the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program director or clinical supervisor.

## **TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION**

### CPR

CPR certification must be valid at all times while students are engaged in clinical supervised practice. A lapse in certification results in immediate removal from clinical supervised practice which will undoubtedly affect the grade in the accompanying supervised practice course. Documentation (scan or photo of both sides of the card) of current CPR certification must be uploaded to E\*Value.

### INFECTION CONTROL TRAINING

Annual Infection Control training (i.e. Bloodborne Pathogen training) is required for all students. Professional phase students complete training provided through the OSU Wexner Medical Center online training system (<https://buckeyelearn.osu.edu>). Instructions for completing this training are posted on Canvas. Instructions for completing this training are posted on E\*Value. Students must upload documentation of their annual training into their profile on E\*Value.

### HIPPA PRIVACY STANDARD (See SHRS Policy 12)

Upon admission to the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program and prior to beginning clinical supervised practice, students are required to complete training in the HIPAA privacy standard. This training is provided through the OSU Wexner Medical Center online training system (<https://buckeyelearn.osu.edu>). Instructions for completing this training are posted on E\*Value. Students must upload documentation of their training into their profile on E\*Value.

## **CURRICULUM**

Entry into the professional program is selective and competitive. Students may use approved transfer credit for pre-professional coursework, but transfer credit may not be used for required professional courses, except under petition and review by the Co-Directors and/or admissions committee.

The professional program is comprehensive and includes both didactic (classroom) and supervised practice components. These two components should not be viewed as separate entities. Instead, they are linked and both are part of our goal to produce the best dietitian possible. The classroom education component focuses on the theory and knowledge behind the practice of dietetics. The supervised practice component focuses on the real-world application of this knowledge. Students should place equal priority on success in BOTH portions of the curriculum. To this end, students should understand that their supervised practice experiences are part of their educational curriculum and students should never think of themselves as working or covering an assigned position. Clinical instructors will supervise and mentor their experience within a particular professional setting or settings. This experience will frequently involve some student autonomy in activity and collaboration in decision-making between the student and clinical instructor; students are never the primary person responsible for the patient care and decision making.

The curriculum includes professional courses are based on core competencies, which include: nutrition;

food science; medical nutrition therapy; foodservice systems management; nutrition education and counseling; research methods; applied nutrition; and professional seminars. Required support courses include biology, chemistry, anatomy and physiology, microbiology, and principles of management.

Professional courses are carefully planned so as to meet knowledge requirements outlined by the ACEND Accreditation Standards for Dietitian Education Programs. The list of competencies will be housed centrally on Carmen to identify which competencies are met by that individual course. Courses are mapped to provide the learning opportunities for each of the individual Performance Indicators defined by the Future Education Model; therefore, attendance and participation in courses and supervised practice are essential to document learning requirements in the program. Thus, students enrolled in the full time program will adhere to the University calendar for session and for breaks and the policy for excused absences. Student must schedule personal travel based on the university calendar.

### **CLINICAL EDUCATION**

All students must complete a minimum of 1,000 hours of supervised practice, including medical nutrition therapy, counseling, food systems management, community nutrition, and a culminating experience. The clinical supervised practice is a critical EDUCATIONAL requirement of the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program. It is neither a “work” requirement nor a volunteer activity. Clinical supervised practice is where students learn to apply and refine the knowledge and skills they learn in their coursework. More importantly, clinical supervised practice is where students integrate all phases of dietetics knowledge, skills, and values to become competent practitioners. It is where students make the transition to clinical practice, develop a practice style, and ultimately embrace the culture of the profession. Undervaluing of clinical supervised practice leads to incompetent and unreliable clinical practice and is antithetical to the mission and legacy of this Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program. To this end, **clinical supervised practice assignments take precedent over all elective courses, out of sequence courses, employment, resident life, social, club, Greek, vacation and other obligations the student may have. Students SHALL NOT miss assigned clinical supervised practice time to attend any of these.** Instead, these should be scheduled around students’ clinical supervised practice obligations, just as they will when students become practicing professionals. The program will follow the university calendar and will necessitate full time engagement during the program during the times school is in session.

As student’s progress through their clinical supervised practice, they will be challenged to: (1) increase their discipline specific knowledge; (2) integrate their classroom knowledge into the clinical setting; (3) become increasingly more proficient with clinical skills; (4) develop and implement evidence based medicine; (5) accept increasing levels of responsibility; and (6) conduct themselves with the utmost professionalism.

## PROFESSIONAL PHASE

Professional phase students engage in assigned clinical supervised practice concurrently with their classroom coursework for two academic years. There is no provision for combining portions of the supervised practice nor shortening the duration. All supervised practice is graded as an academic course (MDN 6X89) and these evaluations are a critical component of the grade for the supervised practice. These courses are culminating experiences where students demonstrate the professional competence necessary to progress through the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program.

## SUPERVISED PRACTICE PLACEMENTS

All clinical supervised practice is conducted at sites affiliated with the MDN Program and with clinical preceptors who have completed specific training prior to student placement. All supervised practice placements are arranged by the MDN Program's Clinical Coordinators who communicate early and regularly with these preceptors when arranging specific student placements. This process is extensive and complex and attempts to place each student in a situation where they can best develop as a professional. While the Clinical Coordinators may elect to take a student's preferences under advisement, placement is not made based on these preferences. Once placements have been finalized, the MDN Program reserves the right to not reassign students nor permit swapping of placements. Students who withdraw from a placement or are removed for competence or professionalism deficiencies will not be re-assigned to other placements during the current schedule. Their supervised practice course grade will reflect any missed time from supervised practice. Students who are failing a supervised practice course are prohibited from withdrawing from the course to avoid receiving a failing grade in the course.

## EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS IN SUPERVISED PRACTICE

- Students must document their completion of competencies on E\*value prior to the completion of each rotation.
- Students should participate in decision-making roles about the care of patients to the extent possible given the patient care situation and the student's level of knowledge, skill and ability. As the student's role increases, preceptors will use professional judgment as to when it is appropriate to apply supervised autonomy to challenge increasing levels of skill and confidence in clinical practice.
- Students are expected to conduct evidence-based searches for articles that correlate with nutritional care assessed during clinical experiences. Students are expected to be prepared to support their clinical decisions with relevant and related current evidence.
- Students with a conflict or concern relative to their supervised practice should follow this reporting chain:



## SUPERVISED PRACTICE HOURS POLICIES

Students receive academic credit for their supervised practice through courses numbered MDN 6X89. Students must be enrolled in a supervised practice course to engage in supervised practice activities and to have their clinical activities covered by the MDN Program's liability insurance. The SHRS has adopted an approximately 4:1 weekly contact hour to semester credit hour policy for full semester clinical supervised practice by graduate students (e.g. supervised practice where 32 hr/wk is anticipated=6 graduate credits), partial semester supervised practice is prorated. Students' actual contact hours will vary.

- Student contact hours are self-reported under their Time Tracking tile in E\*Value. The MDN Program has specific policies governing minimum and maximum contact hours and actively tracks these logs for compliance. Hours should be logged weekly. Failure to log hours in a timely fashion will affect the student's grade in their supervised practice course. E\*Value automatically prohibits logging hours more than 30 days in arrears.

## POLICY ON REPLACEMENT OF EMPLOYEES

Supervised practice is for educational purposes only and is not intended to replace facility employees, except as planned to demonstrate competence/planned learning experiences. Dietetic supervised practice experiences will adhere to competence attainment as described in the curriculum and work assignments for the purpose of education, mastery of techniques and reinforcing knowledge.

## INCLEMENT WEATHER

During inclement weather, students should contact their preceptors to determine if the site is open or closed and to communicate about supervised practice attendance. Students are expected to attend their clinical supervised practice unless one or more of the following has occurred:

- The Ohio State University has cancelled classes at the Columbus Campus due to the weather. The university's operational status is posted at <http://emergency.osu.edu>
- The supervised practice site has closed or cancelled activities.
- The student feels his/her safety is at risk if he/she were to attempt to travel to the supervised practice site (e.g. severe cold for students walking, dangerous road conditions for students driving).

## SUPERVISION DURING SUPERVISED PRACTICE

All clinical supervised practice is supervised by preceptors who typically are state licensed Registered Dietitians. In specifically planned and limited experiences, students may be supervised by a licensed physician or other licensed and/or credentialed healthcare provider appropriate to the setting.

Students and preceptors should never misunderstand the term supervision to mean that students cannot be in autonomous or decision-making roles in patient care. Supervision requires that the preceptor be present, but they should function more as a mentor than supervisor, fostering the student's role as a practitioner rather than a technician or aide. Student autonomy is a critical part of developing competence and is emphatically encouraged by the MDN Program. Autonomy involves the self-directed collection and interpretation of information and use of such information to formulate and implement a plan of action. The plan of action should be vetted through the preceptor prior to implementation to ensure its appropriateness and patient safety, but the student should be the one to develop and implement it whenever possible and to the greatest degree possible. Students not pushed to become autonomous do not become competent to practice independently upon graduation.

## POLICIES FOR STUDENTS DURING SUPERVISED PRACTICE

Each supervised practice course (MDN 6X89) has specific requirements outlined in its syllabus that is available on Canvas and E\*Value. Students should familiarize themselves with these requirements prior to starting the supervised practice placement. Course requirements include but are not limited to daily journals, class meetings and assignments.

Competencies must be documented in PXDX in E\*Value for each rotation by the end of each the supervised practice course. Failure to do so will result in an unsatisfactory course grade for that rotation.

## EVALUATIONS DURING SUPERVISED PRACTICE

Preceptors will complete the student evaluation available in E\*value for each student prior to the end of each scheduled rotation. Students are additionally required to complete the evaluation of the preceptor and facility for each rotation during their supervised practice.

## PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

The public rightly expects that those in the medical professions will adhere to a set of values that reflect their commitment to excellence, responsibility, respect for all, integrity, prudence, trustworthiness, and evidence-based practice. The SHRS and the MDN Program consider any student enrolled in the School to be an active member of their profession at all times. Professional behavior is expected not just in the classroom but in supervised practice, community outreach and other environments where students are involved. Commitment to integrity in espousing the values of the

profession means that members of the profession (including students) behave in ways that will reflect positively on the profession even when they are not in class, on the grounds of the university, in supervised practice settings or at professional conferences. Furthermore, students will practice within the scope of the profession as outlined in Ohio statutory law, based on the existing evidence, without imposing personal beliefs and biases on the individual. **Students who behave in a manner counter to the ethics and values of the profession, regardless of the setting in which these behaviors occur, may be subject to adverse [academic and/or professional sanctions](#) from the MDN Program and/or the SHRS, up to and including program disenrollment.**

## ETHICS AND LAWS

Legal and ethical practices are hallmarks of professionalism and are cornerstones upon which professional conduct is built. Personal ethics require certain inherent elements of character that include honesty, loyalty, understanding, and the ability to respect the rights and dignity of others.

### Ethical Codes

- Students will adhere to the SHRS Student Code of Ethics found in the [SHRS Student Handbook](#).
- Students will adhere to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND) Code of Ethics <http://www.eatright.org/codeofethics/> and Scope of Dietetics Practice Framework: <https://www.eatrightpro.org/practice/quality-management/scope-of-practice>

### Legal Requirements

- Students will adhere to the Federal, State and local laws and regulations governing healthcare delivery and educational environments including but not limited to confidentiality laws, drug laws, medical device laws, non-discrimination laws, billing and insurance laws and human research protection laws.
- Students will adhere to all criminal and civil laws of the jurisdiction in which they find themselves.
- Students will self-report any arrests, criminal charges, or criminal convictions to the MDN Program within 24 hours.

### Honor Codes

Students will adhere to the University's [Code of Student Conduct](#) as well as the SHRS Professional Honor Code, Academic Honor Code, and the MDN Program professionalism requirements outlined below.

### Appearance (See SHRS Policy 10)

An important part of professionalism is maintaining a professional appearance. Clinical supervised practice requires specific professional attire, hygiene and grooming practices. Students must maintain a neat and professional appearance that enables them to perform their duties efficiently and safely at all times during clinical supervised practice. Students should clarify expectations with their preceptor prior to beginning each clinical supervised practice. Unless otherwise directed, students are expected



to adhere to the OSU Health System Dress Code. Students who do not comply with appearance guidelines may be sent home from the supervised practice site for the day and placed on professional warning. An ongoing pattern of inappropriate dress will lead to professional sanctions up to and including probation or disenrollment.

### Hygiene

Proper hygiene is critical for controlling disease transmission and helping create a professional appearance. Students are expected to maintain impeccable personal daily hygiene.

- Daily hygiene includes clean skin, hair, and teeth; regular use of deodorant/antiperspirants; and regular dental hygiene.
- Makeup and cologne/perfume should be minimal and not be distracting. Some patients are sensitive to cosmetics or perfume/cologne and these items may be prohibited in some settings.
- Students are expected to engage in frequent hand washing or the use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers prior to beginning supervised practice, between patients and before leaving the supervised practice facility daily.

### Grooming

Good grooming is essential to enable health care providers to perform their professional duties as well as to create a professional appearance.

- Long fingernails can injure patients, are incompatible with many clinical skills and food service safety and are therefore, prohibited. Nails should be no more than  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch long. Artificial fingernails or items affixed to fingernails have been shown to be an infection hazard and are prohibited in patient care and foodservice activities.
- Hair should be pulled back or otherwise kept out of the face so that it does not interfere with vision, communication or the performance of clinical skills. Facial hair must be kept neat and well-trimmed. In foodservice areas, hair coverings must be worn.
- Jewelry should be minimal, professionally tasteful, and not interfere with performance of work. In food service, guidelines must be adhered.
  - Jewelry that cannot be easily decontaminated should not be worn.
  - Visible piercings are limited to the ears only with two earrings permitted in each ear.
  - Exceptions for religious or medical alert jewelry will be considered.
- Students must make reasonable attempts to cover their tattoos during supervised practice.

### Dress Code/Uniforms

Students should clarify the dress code for their specific supervised practice setting with their preceptor on or before the first day of the supervised practice.

## General Requirements

- Students must wear a MDN lab coat in acute care rotations. Lab coats must be washed and ironed regularly.
- Hose or socks must be worn in the acute care setting.
- In all other rotations, business casual clothing is required.
- Closed toe shoes are required in food service rotations.
- Clothing should be clean, wrinkle-free and in good repair.
- Clothing should not interfere with mobility or clinical duties and should fit well, not be overly tight, or revealing. Clothing must remain concealing while performing normal tasks such as reaching or crouching activities.
- Sleeveless tops, tank tops, bare midriffs, and spaghetti straps cannot be worn during supervised practice.
- Appropriate undergarments should be worn at all times.
- Low-rise waistlines are prohibited.
- Skirts and shorts should not be shorter than where the fingertips touch the legs when the arms are extended down at the sides or, alternately, should have a 6 inch inseam or greater.
- Jeans or denim pants / skirts, regardless of color are prohibited.
- Shoes and socks / hosiery must be worn at all times and footwear must be clean and in good repair.
- Unless otherwise instructed, OSU Medical Center Identification badges are to be worn above the waist with the name and photo visible during patient care.
- The MDN Program reserves the right to make accommodations or revisions to these requirements as necessary.

## **BEHAVIOR**

### Personal Responsibility and Accountability

Personal responsibility and accountability are cornerstones of professionalism. No professional ever earns the respect or trust of patients or colleagues without first demonstrating the high degree of personal responsibility and self-sacrifice that are defining features of a profession that puts the well-being of others as its highest priority.

- Students are personally responsible for their behavior at all times and in all settings. They shall not make excuses nor blame others for their own shortcomings.
- Students shall hold themselves and each other accountable for their behavior and shall never enable or turn a blind eye allowing another student to violate the MDN Program's professionalism standards. They are encouraged to disclose any violations of which they are aware to the MDN Program. The MDN Program will make every attempt to keep such disclosure anonymous.
- Students shall assume personal responsibility for their own academic and clinical success and shall actively pursue excellence in all phases of their program.

- Students shall assume responsibility for the quality of care provided to their patients and shall never be party to the delivery of care that does not meet accepted standards.
- Students shall assume responsibility for the quality and condition of their working environment by being meticulous about the upkeep and cleanliness of facilities and equipment.
- Students shall accept responsibility for maintaining the legacy of excellence of this Program. They shall continue to actively further that legacy through hard work and commitment to excellence rather than assuming that they will be excellent simply because others who preceded them worked hard and became excellent.

### Sound Judgment

As healthcare providers, students' ability to make sound judgments while under pressure is absolutely vital to their success and to their professional competence. Words and deeds at any time and in any setting that cause the soundness of that judgment to be questioned weaken students' credibility and therefore their competence. Students shall recognize that their judgment in their personal life and during times outside of class or supervised practice impacts their fitness for the MDN Program and for supervised practice placements. Students who demonstrate questionable judgment should not expect to receive favorable recommendations from their faculty or preceptors nor should they expect the MDN Program or its members to put their personal reputation in jeopardy by creating extra opportunities for them above the minimal program requirements. Such opportunities are earned and are not automatic.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

People are judged by others based on how they speak and what they communicate. Students must work to communicate clearly, effectively, efficiently and professionally. Both the content and the delivery must meet professional expectations.

#### Verbal & Non-Verbal

Students should work diligently to use professional language and vocabulary in their dietetics-related communications and be aware of how their body language impacts their communications.

- Word choices should be appropriate to the audience and setting (e.g. jargon to professionals, lay language to patients).
- Vulgar and inappropriate language has no place in professional communications.
- Body language should be professional, respectful, attentive and appropriate to the situation at hand.

#### Written

For paper communications with students during the academic year, the MDN Program uses the current local address as listed in official student records. Paper communications during winter and

summer breaks are sent to the student's permanent address. Students should ensure that their desired addresses are correct and up to date.

When students sign records or other documentation, they should use a designation that identifies them as a MDN student so that no one will misunderstand them to be a licensed and credentialed person.

### Email

Email is a primary means of communication between the MDN Program and its students. All students were issued a secure Ohio State University email account upon enrollment. The MDN Program reasonably assumes that email from this account is from the student who owns the account and is not a forgery or phishing attempt. Therefore, this account is the ONLY email address that the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program will use for communications with students.

- Students should check their email in this account daily (even during breaks and the summer) and make sure that their e-mailbox is not full.
- Failure to check your email or to keep your e-mailbox cleaned out is never an acceptable excuse for missing official communications.
- Students shall use appropriate professional etiquette in all Email
- Communications of a professional nature:
  - Include a salutation / greeting at the top that is professionally appropriate. Do not use the first name of faculty or preceptors unless they have asked you to call them by their first name.
  - Avoid slang, poor grammar, or the use of text messaging jargon (e.g. "y r u txtng me?")
  - Include a signature that identifies the sender as an Ohio State University Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Student and includes a return email address.

Brutus Buckeye  
Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Student  
[brutus.1@buckeyemail.osu.edu](mailto:brutus.1@buckeyemail.osu.edu)

- Students who send professionally related emails from non-OSU accounts should make professional choices regarding their username / email address.
  - Inappropriate choices can cast the student in a less than professional light (e.g. 2hot4u@email.com).
  - Students shall not use inappropriate email addresses to send email communications in which they identify themselves as an Ohio State Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Students.
  - The MDN Program will not provide students with academic information to accounts other than the student's official OSU account.

## Telephone

Students should:

- Ensure that the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program records contain their local / cellular phone number for urgent communications
- Add the phone numbers of the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program Co-Director, Clinical Coordinator, their advisor and their preceptor(s) / supervised practice facilities into their cell phone's contacts list.
- Do not call or text faculty or preceptors for non-professional reasons or, barring emergencies, at times outside of normal working hours.
- Ensure that incoming voicemail greetings are appropriately professional. Inappropriate voicemail greetings that are encountered by preceptors, potential employers, etc. are a poor reflection on the student and on the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program.
- Students should answer the telephone at a supervised practice site as follows, "[Name of Site], this is [Name of Student], how may I help you?"

USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES DURING CLASS AND SUPERVISED PRACTICE See SHRS Handbook.

The use of cell phones, tablets, laptops or other electronic devices is prohibited during class or supervised practice, unless they are being used specifically for class or supervised practice related purposes.

- Students who need to have a phone on for emergency purposes should discuss the issue with the instructor or preceptor prior to the beginning of the day's class or supervised practice.
- Taking photos or making video or audio recordings of the School of Health and Rehabilitation property, clinical supervised practice sites, and patients is **strictly** prohibited without the written consent of the institution and all parties involved. (See Policy 12)
- No student shall post photos or information about supervised practice on social media platforms or other public forums.
- Electronic transmission of data related to patient specific identifiers is a violation of HIPAA and is subject to disciplinary action, which may include academic sanctions and legal accountability.

## Off-The-Books Healthcare

Students must adhere to state laws regarding licensure and scope of practice. Student should never provide private "after hours" or "off the books" care that circumvents the healthcare plan that is in place for our patients. Doing so is both unethical and illegal. If a patient contacts a student outside of normal care environments to request nutritional care, the student should advise the patient to contact their healthcare provider or to seek care in an appropriate facility. Students must also notify their preceptor of the request at the first available opportunity.

## PUNCTUALITY

The MDN Program is designed to meet the competencies necessary to function as an entry-level practitioner through classroom and supervised practice activities. Missing class sessions and supervised practice rotations compromises the capability to meet these competencies. Professional, ethical and engaged participation is expected in all phases.

Attendance is **required** for all classes and assigned supervised practice experiences. If the student is late or cannot attend class because of illness or due to an excused absence, the instructor in charge of the course should be notified prior or as soon as possible in the case of an emergency. Students in supervised practice should notify their preceptor and their faculty member if they expect to be late or absent. Students shall be punctual for their classes and clinical supervised practice. Tardiness and absenteeism are not acceptable for practicing professionals and are therefore not acceptable for students. Students who will be late or must miss a supervised practice or class experience must immediately contact the preceptor or Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program instructor to notify them of the situation. Any instance of tardiness or absenteeism should be accompanied by an appropriate excuse. Requesting an absence is not sufficient to assume the request is or will be approved. Outside jobs and student organization obligations shall not be accepted as excuses for tardiness or absenteeism.

For any initial attendance or tardiness issue, the student will be dismissed from the venue for the day. Prior to returning to clinical supervised practice, the student must meet with his/her preceptor to discuss the issue. For a second or any subsequent offense, the student will incur an automatic 3-day suspension and must submit a plan of action to the clinical coordinator before being allowed to return to clinical supervised practice. Beginning with the second offense, the student will be penalized with a letter grade deduction from the final evaluation.

## **PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS**

### University Committee Memberships

Students are encouraged to participate in the Program, School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences Student Council, and any other university-related organizations.

### Student Dietetic Association (SDA)

All students admitted to the Program are eligible to become members in this association. Dues are nominal and payable to the SDA treasurer. The purpose of this organization is to promote the dietetic profession through meetings, programs and activities related to dietetics and nutrition. It also serves as an ombudsman for the needs of the group and stimulates fellowship and professional growth. Election of officers is held Spring Semester of each academic year. Meetings are held at least twice per semester and include opportunities for professional education, community service and social activities.

### Affiliate Membership-Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

Students are required to apply for student membership in The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. This entitles students to a subscription to the Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, access to the “members only” section of the AND website, and discounts on AND publications and products. Many of the resources provided by the Academy are actively used during the curriculum for learning activities and professional assets.

### Affiliate Membership- Columbus Dietetic Association

Students are encouraged to apply for student membership in the Columbus Dietetic Association. Meetings are held monthly and topic areas vary. Attending meetings provides students with good networking experiences and increases educational opportunities. Attendance at such meetings can be recorded in your Portfolio to show professional development.

## **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

### Interference with outside employment

The professional phase of the MDN Program requires students to complete clinical supervised practice that can occur at any time of day and frequently changes times with little pre-notice. Because of the dynamic nature of the supervised practice schedule, it will likely interfere with the student’s ability to hold outside employment. Students need to make appropriate financial plans prior to enrolling in the professional phase of the MDN Program.

While students are not strictly prohibited from holding outside employment, such employment SHALL NOT interfere with the student’s ability to complete their clinical supervised practice. When faced with a choice between a job and assigned clinical supervised practice, supervised practice must be the first priority. Missing scheduled clinical supervised practice will result in deductions on student’s clinical evaluations which will affect the grade in the supervised practice course.

## Program Costs

The MDN Program maintains a [list of program costs](#) on its website. This list is updated annually. Access to a car is required during supervised practice as driving to sites is required. The cost of gas and automobile upkeep should be considered as a program cost as well. In addition to the University tuition and fees the following items are required but are not limited to:

Item	Estimated Cost*
Student membership to Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics	\$58
Student member to Columbus Dietetic Association (recommended)	\$10
Lab Coat	\$30
MDN Polo Shirt *these are ordered at the beginning of Autumn semester*	\$20
CPR Training	\$30

\*Subject to change



## Compliance with Policies and Requirements

By signing below, I, \_\_\_\_\_ indicate that I have read, understand, and agree to abide by all of the policies and requirements of the Ohio State University Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program outlined in this student handbook and the Handbook for the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences. My questions about these policies and requirements have been answered and I understand that the Division Director, Program Director and/or Clinical Coordinator can answer additional questions should they arise. This agreement is in effect for the entire academic year and must be renewed annually.

I am specifically aware of the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program's requirements for [graduation, retention and good standing](#).

I am specifically aware of the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program's [Safety & Capability](#) requirements including but not limited to:

- Background checks and 24 hour self-disclosure if arrested or charged with a crime
- Substance abuse and drug testing including "for cause" testing
- Technical standards (including changes in status) and immunization compliance
- Communicable diseases and blood borne pathogen exposure

I am specifically aware of the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program's policies about supervised practice commitments including but not limited to:

- [Academic](#) and [non-academic](#) schedule conflicts, [punctuality and absenteeism](#), and [outside employment](#)
- Placements and loss of placement
- Hours requirements, limits, and logging
- Supervision during clinical care and prohibition of unsupervised practice

I am specifically aware of the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program's [Professionalism](#) requirements including but not limited to:

- [Ethics and Laws](#)
- [Honor Codes](#)
- [Competence](#)
- [Appearance](#)
- Responsibility, Accountability and Judgment in class, during supervised practice, and in my personal life [[details](#)]
- Communications and Confidentiality [[details](#)]
- Use of [electronic devices](#) and [social networking](#)
- Relationships and Professional Boundaries [[details](#)]

I understand that violation of the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program policies or requirements carries consequences such as suspension from or loss of supervised practice

placements as well as academic and professionalism sanctions up to and including probation and program disenrollment.

### Information Release

I authorize the Master of Dietetics and Nutrition Program to provide information about me including my name, likeness, demographic and educational information to their accrediting body (ACEND) and/or Commission for Dietetic Registrations as part of program reporting requirements and /or credentialing eligibility verification requirements.

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Signature

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Date