

UTHealth Dietetic Internship

Policies and Procedures

Last Update: 12/2021

The UTHealth Dietetic Handbook Rules and Regulations are written based on the following manual.

Dietetic Internship Policies and Procedures

Policy DI 1 – Application Process

Student Evaluation and Acceptance – UTHealth Dietetic Internship

We are a combined program which requires two separate applications with two different deadlines. The majority of the Dietetic Interns take approximately 22 months to complete the Dietetic Internship Program.

We are using the Dietetic Internship Centralized Application Service (DICAS) which may be accessed at <https://portal.dicas.org>.

The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) School of Public Health participates in either the Pre-Select Program with two different options or the DICAS Selection Process.

PRE-SELECT

The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) School of Public Health participates in the Pre-Select Program. You may qualify if you meet either of the following requirements. Applications for each option of the Pre-Select program have different due dates.

Option 1: Scholarship Eligibility

The due date for the first option for students applying for the MPH and eligible for scholarship money is **December 1**. The applicants are reviewed and approved for the MPH/DI program and they can qualify for either of the following scholarships:

- ONS fund (Outstanding New Student) - the MPH student receives \$1000 and has their out-of-state fees waived, if applicable. The student may be awarded a scholarship based on merit. This allows out-of-state undergraduates the opportunity to receive a high quality education at in-state tuition rates.
- Health Promotion/ Behavioral Health Scholarship – same requirements as the ONS funds. *(Note: All DI students are admitted to the Department of Health Promotion/Behavioral Health)*

Applications are reviewed and approved for the MPH/DI program with an acceptance by **January 31**.

The DI director notifies D&D Digital providing the admitted students' names and email addresses by the February 1st deadline. The DI director notifies applicants they are admitted and no longer eligible to participate in the DICAS Selection Process (computer match.)

Option 2: UT System Graduates

In the second option, UT system graduates apply for early admission to the MPH program with applications due **January 15**. Applications are reviewed and approved for the MPH/DI program with an acceptance by **January 31**.

The DI director notifies D&D Digital providing the admitted students' names and email addresses by the February 1st deadline. The DI director notifies applicants they are admitted and no longer eligible to participate in the DICAS Selection Process (computer match.)

DICAS Selection Process

UTHealth will continue to participate in the DICAS selection process for those students who do not meet the Pre-select criteria. Students may also be considered for the UTHealth Dietetic Internship by applying through [DICAS.org](https://www.dicas.org)

- The application for UTHealth School of Public Health MPH/DI aligns with the DICAS application time frame. Both online applications SOPHAS and DICAS must be completed and submitted by 11:59 p.m. Central Standard Time on February due date.
- Each prospective student must be admitted into UTHealth before April due d to be considered for the Dietetic Internship.

General Application Directions

All applicants must apply to UT Health through SOPHAS.org regardless of which option is chosen.

All applications to UTHealth, regardless of the option chosen, is through SOPHAS.org (School of Public Health Application Services). Please see the [UTHealth Office of Student Affairs How to Apply](#) website for application requirements.

We will have three different deadlines for the SOPHAS application depending on which selection process you are choosing.

Option 1- the student must complete the application by December 1 in order to be considered for scholarships. This is a deadline set by the school.

Option 2- the student must be a UT system graduate, that application is due by January 15. The last deadline aligns with the DICAS selection process.

Please Note: There are only 9 positions available for the Pre-Select Program. The other positions will be selected using the DICAS Selection Process. Until a student has received confirmation of admissions into the UT Health Pre-Select Program you should refer to the DICAS Selection Process Instructions. If we do not fill our 9 Pre-Select we will utilize the DICAS Selection Process.

- Please select the MPH – Health Promotions & Health Education Houston Campus – Dietetic Internship – Fall 2021
- GRE scores must be received by SOPHAS.Org to be considered for admissions. Applicants are encouraged to take the exam early.
- GRE code for UT Health School of Public Health is 4479.
- The DICAS fee is \$40.00 for the first application and \$20.00 for each additional applications.
- Email DICASinfor@DICAS.org for further information.
- Applicants to the UT Health Dietetic Internship must complete a 1000 word or less personal statement. The essay should address the following questions:

- Why do you want to enter the dietetics profession?
- What experiences have helped you prepare for your career?
- What are both your short and long term goals?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses or areas needing improvements?
- Official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended should be sent to: DICAS – Transcript Dept., PO Box 9118, Watertown, Ma 02472.
- DICAS applicants must include the name and contact information (specifically an email address) for each of the 3 required references. This will trigger DICAS to send an email message to each reviewer requesting completion of a reference form. The reviewer will complete their reference form on-line. Students submitting more than one application must use the same individuals as references for each application. Please request your references early to prevent delays in processing your application. It is recommended to include 2 academic individuals and 1 work/volunteer supervisor as references.
- The UHealth School of Public Health Dietetic Internship and MPH program requires a separate UHealth School of Public Health Dietetic Internship Summary Experience form, writing sample, and fee of \$25.00 by February 15, 2021. A previously written writing sample related to nutrition or public health can be a publication, class report/project/presentation, or work related document you authored independently.
 - Submit the \$25.00 fee here: <https://go.uth.edu/di-registration>
 - Spring 2021, the DICAS application fee has increased. **The first designation is \$50 and \$25 for each additional designation.**
 - Submit your Summary Experience form and writing sample here: <https://sph.uth.edu/research/centers/dell/forms/dietetic-internship-application.htm>
- Applicants must register online for computer matching with D & D Digital and select dietetic internship priority choices by 11:59 p.m. Central Time on February 15, 2022.
 - There is a \$50.00 computer matching fee for D & D Digital.
 - The UHealth School of Public Health Dietetic Internship is #262.
- To prevent delays in your application process, e-mail us at dieteticinternship@uth.tmc.edu when you:
 - Complete the SOPHAS application
 - Complete the DICAS application
 - Complete the UHealth School of Public Health Dietetic Internship Summary Experience form, submit both the UHealth School of Public Health DI \$25 fee and writing sample.

Dietetic Internship Policies and Procedures

Policy DI 2 – Application & Admission Review for New Cohort Members

Admissions Review Process – UTHealth Dietetic Internship

All applicants must apply to UT Health through SOPHAS.org regardless of which option is chosen.

All applications to UTHealth, regardless of the option chosen, is through SOPHAS.org (School of Public Health Application Services).

1. Dietetic Internship Director works closely with Health Promotions/Health Education (HP/HE) coordinator and reviews all applicants received requesting both HP/HE – DI (Dietetic Internship)
2. DI Director is notified of all accepted applicants for HP/HE-DI.
3. DI Director downloads all accepted applicants SOPHAS applications for review.
4. DI Director documents the following for the DI committee to review:
 - a. Applicant's name
 - b. Applicant's university
 - c. Applicant's overall GPA (Grade Point Average)
 - d. Applicant's overall DPD GPA (Didactic Program in Dietetics GPA- DICAS only)
 - e. Applicant's GRE scores
 - f. Applicant's Community Experiences and hours served
 - g. Applicant's Clinical Experiences and hours served
 - h. Applicant's Foodservice Experiences and hours served (includes retail, school and hospital experiences)
 - i. Applicant's awards
 - j. Applicant's secondary language skills
 - k. Applicant's Volunteer Experiences and hours served
 - l. Applicant's Work Experiences
 - m. Applicant's Personal Statement
 - n. Applicant's References and letters
 - o. Applicant's personal work and writings from undergraduate work.
5. The nutrition team will receive and review the applicants GPA, work, volunteer, personal statements and references. Team members will score and rank students based on the submitted information.
6. Team members will meet prior to selection to discuss and review applicants, making selection base on the above criteria. This is done base on the student as a whole and not one individual item.
7. See Attached Spreadsheet for applicants.

These items are used to determine each new cohort.

UTHealth admits students of any race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status, and/or disability to all the rights, privileges and activities generally accorded or made available to students at this institution. It does not discriminate in administration of its educational policies, admission, policy scholarship and loan programs or athletic and other school administered programs.

Dietetic Internship Policies and Procedures

Policy DI 2.5 – Admission Requirements for New Cohort Members

Student Requirements – UTHealth Dietetic Internship

Students must meet the following criteria to be admitted into the UTHealth Dietetic Internship:

1. Verification Statement showing completion of Didactic Program in Dietetics curriculum or Declaration of Intent to complete DPD (obtained from your DPD Director), Verification statement completion date must show recency of education within five years*
2. Official transcript showing degree granted.
3. GPA of >3.0 or above based on a scale of 4.0.
4. Credit is not awarded for prior learning toward program requirements (coursework and/or experiential)
5. Graduate Record Examination (GRE) verbal, quantitative and writing scores are evaluated. This has been waived during the COVID Pandemic and is reviewed annually for changes and reinstatement of exam.
6. Evidence of the following immunizations:
 - a. TDAP – Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis must be renewed every 10 years
 - b. Flu – must be current with each Flu Season (Sept-April) and is due annually. Records must include manufacturer, Flu lot number and expiration date, injection site and provider's signature. Receipts are not accepted.
 - c. TB screening within 6 months of practicum. After a positive TB Skin test, student must have a TB blood test prior to having a chest x-ray – Some facilities may require TB test more frequently than UTHealth requirements.
 - d. MMR – 2 Dose or Positive Titer – Measles, Mumps & Rubella Titer – must submit lab reports of titers.
 - e. Varicella – 2 Dose or Positive Titer – must submit lab reports
 - f. Hepatitis B Series – 3 Doses – Dose 2 (30) days after dose 1, Dose 3 (5 months) after dose 2.
Hepatitis B Titer (Hepatitis B Surface Antibody) after completion of Hepatitis B Series.
 - g. COVID – 19 Vaccination Policy - The Dietetic Internship will follow the UTHealth COVID-19 guidelines and in some situations exceed those requirements to best meet the environment of the training experiences in the intern's supervised practice experiences. While it is not the policy of UTHealth to mandate COVID-19 vaccinations for university students, it has become the accepted policy of most hospital and clinical supervised rotations in the Houston area. Dietetic Interns need to be aware that if they are not vaccinated, supervised rotation placements in the medical community will be denied. Proof of the COVID 19 vaccination will be required paperwork for the student's file prior to beginning the Dietetic Internship Program.
7. Admissions to UTHealth are completed prior to DI selection. A student may be admitted into the UTHealth University but not selected for UTHealth Dietetic Internship.

UTHealth admits students of any race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status, and/or disability to all the rights, privileges and activities generally accorded or made available to students at this institution. It does not discriminate in administration of its educational policies, admission, policy scholarship and loan programs or athletic and other school administered programs.

Dietetic Internship Policies and Procedures

Policy DI 3 – UTHealth Degree Planner

Degree Planner for DI under HP/HE – UTHealth Dietetic Internship

All applicants fall under Health Promotions/Health Education

A specific degree planner is provided at the beginning of the Dietetic Internship during orientation. This provides a guide for the student to achieve and complete both the Dietetic Internship and Masters of Public Health within the guidelines established by the Dietetic Internship.

This is reviewed by both Health Promotions/Health Education on an annual basis for changes within both the University and Dietetic Internship.

Each year the HP/HE review for the incoming cohort with suggested changes for the class.

See the [2021-2022 MPH Health Promotion/Health Education - Dietetic Internship degree planner](#)

This is presented to new cohort in orientation with an explanation of courses and recommended course loads.

Dietetic Internship Policies and Procedures

Policy DI 4.0 Program Format

The UTHHealth Dietetic Internship and Master of Public Health is a combined program that is approximately 22 months for completion. Interns are scheduled for supervised practices in both the spring and summer semesters.

Absences (Sick or Personal time) must be reported to DI director and Supervised Practice Coordinators or Preceptors.

Fall 1 – Recommended Courses:

PHM1110L	Health Promotions and Behavioral Sciences in Public Health
PHM 2612L	Epidemiology 1
PHM 1232	Public Health and Nutrition
PHM 5098	Culinary Medicine Course
PHM	Student Elective (1 or 2 hour course)

Spring 1 – Recommended Course and Supervised Practice Rotations:

PH 9997-800	Community, Hospital and School Foodservice -Supervised Practice Rotations
PHM 1690L	Biostats
PHM 1111L	Health Promotion Theory and Methods
PH 509805212	Garden for Health

Summer – Recommended Courses and Supervised Practice Rotations:

PH3715 L	Management & Policy Concepts in Public Health
PHM 1113L	Intervention Mapping
PHM 997-850	Diabetes Practicum
PHM 850	Diabetes – short Course
PH1496L	Seed-to-Plate, Capstone or Thesis

Fall 2 – Recommended Courses:

PH 1229	Simulation Course – MNT
PH 1231	Medical Nutrition Therapy
PH 1496L	Seed-to-Plate, Capstone or Thesis
PHM 2110	Public Health Ecology
PHM 5010	Intro to Qualitative Research in Public Health

Spring 2 – Recommended Courses and Supervised Practice Rotations:

PHM 997-870	Clinical Supervised Practice Rotations
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This is the recommended course schedule load but is subject to change with department changes and course changes.

Dietetic Internship Policies and Procedures

Policy DI 5.0 Program Requirements & Program Costs

The UTHealth Dietetic Internship and Master of Public Health is a combined program that is approximately 22 months for completion. Interns are scheduled for supervised practices in both the spring and summer semesters.

The following are requirements of the Dietetic Internship:

1. Dietetic interns must complete the medical history form and complete all required immunizations w/ the health status signed by a physician.
2. Maintain both Health and Malpractice insurance while participating with the UTHealth Dietetic Internship.
3. Each Dietetic Intern must be enrolled as a Full-Time student through the UTSPH during their supervised practice experience in order to be covered by the university's malpractice insurance.
4. Maintain car insurance while participating with the UTHealth Dietetic Internship.
5. Student support services provided the student affairs office is located on the second floor of the SPH. Each dietetic intern must attend new student orientation conducted by the office of student affairs.

6. **Estimated Expenses:**

Application fee	\$25.00
Dietetic Internship Fee	\$5000.00 (half payable each spring semester- this is \$2500.00 each year)
Dietetic Internship Textbooks, lab coats and supplies	\$500.00/ semester
Student AND Membership	\$58.00
Specific Supervised Rotation requirements	Variable (ie, CBC, Drug Testing, CPR, Reliable transportation, travel, meals while in rotations, gas & parking)
Professional Meetings	\$250.00 & up
Background Check Drug Screening	Approximately \$50.00 \$50.00 at UTHealth Clinic or designated locations
Immunizations	Varies
Tuitions and Fees	https://www.uth.edu/registrar/current-students/registration/tuition-fee-schedule.htm
Off Campus Room & Board	Varies Approximately \$1000-\$1500/month

Note: fees do not include property deposits or assigned course fees, and are subject to change without prior notice. Estimated expenses are approximations based on current costs/trends.

This does not include tuitions and fees for UTHealth School of Public Health. These fees can be found at

<https://www.uth.edu/registrar/current-students/registration/tuition-fee-schedule.htm>

Financial Aid, Withdrawal and Refund of tuition and Fees and other information-See UTHealth Registrar website at

<https://www.uth.edu/registrar/current-students/index.htm>

Department Scholarships

The department of Health Promotions and Behavioral Sciences awards academic scholarships annually to new students (ONS- Outstanding New Students) Awards of \$1000.00 or more for a full academic year can result in out-of-state tuition waivers for the out-of-state students. Scholarships deadlines are set each spring by the department and the new applicant must meet a December 1 deadline for completed applications.

Graduate Assistantships

Graduate Assistantships are available to selected programs for students who have been accepted into the department programs. Inquiries should be made to the Coordinators of each department.

Academic Common Market

Many southern states** participate in the Academic Common Market, an interstate agreement for sharing uncommon programs (<https://www.sreb.org/academic-common-market>). Residents of these states who are accepted for admission into selected out-of-state programs can enroll on an in-state tuition basis. The two requirements:

1. Acceptance into a program to which your state has made arrangements to send its students.
2. Proof that you are a legal resident of that state.

Students should write directly to the institution for admissions information. After you have been accepted, write your state coordinator for certification of residency.

**Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Maryland, Delaware, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana.

Dietetic Internship Policies and Procedures

Policy DI 6.0 Program Calendar

Dietetic Internship Program Calendar

The supervised practice experience of the Dietetic Internship typically occurs during two spring semesters and the summer in between the 2-year DI Program. If a holiday is recognized by the facility in which a Dietetic Intern is placed, then the Dietetic Intern may observe the holiday with the approval of the Dietetic Internship Program Director. Assignments may be given to the Dietetic Intern for outside work during this time.

Each calendar year, Dietetic Interns are provided with a tentative calendar, this calendar has events, projects, special university dates, and garden schedule for cohort teams. These items are tentative based on previous years, and current school calendar.

HOLIDAYS, VACATIONS, ABSENCES, RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS

- School and class holidays are designated by UTHealth See the Registrar's website for the UTSPH academic calendar <https://www.uth.edu/registrar/current-students/student-information/academiccalendar.htm>.
- Depending on the schedules of facilities, Dietetic Interns in the program may be required to work on a university holiday and some weekends.
- In the event that an excused absence is requested and approved at other times, the Dietetic Internship Director and the supervised practice preceptor will determine the make-up time. Any absences are expected to be for a justifiable cause that is reported in advance to the Dietetic Internship Director and the SP preceptor.
- The observance of religious holidays, other than those designated by the State of Texas, must be approved in advance by the Dietetic Internship Director and SP preceptor. Arrangements to complete assignments and/or examinations must be made in advance.
- The UTSPH academic calendar should not be considered the calendar for the Dietetic Internship. In addition to scheduled clinical experience hours, Dietetic Interns are required to attend all scheduled PPC and orientation sessions as part of their practicum requirements.
- There are required training sessions during the winter and summer breaks. Plan to be available orientation week (1 week prior to the start of the spring semester), and during June/July for the diabetes PPC lecture series as well as the mandatory health worker training sessions held by the Diabetes Camps. Second year interns will have simulation orientation during the month of August prior to their second year. Also, any missed clinical hours will be made up during Spring Break or during the Summer Semester.

ABSENCES DUE TO ILLNESS, INJURY OR TARDINESS

Illness or Injury and Health Insurance Responsibility Internship Director and your preceptor at the supervised practice setting. Any injury or exposure to communicable diseases should be reported to the Internship Director immediately and she will assist you in completing an "Incidence Report" to be filed with UTHealth. If the Dietetic Intern is injured in any facility, then that facility will assist the intern in obtaining immediate medical attention as may be required. The Dietetic Intern's health insurance will be used to pay for the medical treatment if required. The facility does not assume any liability or responsibility for the health or custodial care costs of the intern. The Dietetic Intern is not covered under Worker's Compensation Insurance, since in their role as a Dietetic Intern they are not employees of UTHealth.

Work Schedule Approval or Changes for Supervised Practice and Tardiness

It is the Dietetic Intern's responsibility to complete an approved work schedule with the primary preceptor at the initiation of SP rotation. Make sure that the preceptor knows when you will be attending class. Any changes in your work schedule should be confirmed with the preceptor at least a week prior. The work schedule at the facility should be viewed as official work time. The rotation should be treated as a job and the Dietetic Intern is expected to work the same hours as the preceptor at the facility (see Appendix for expected hours for each SP rotation). The preceptors who train you may provide future recommendations when you are applying for a professional position as a dietitian. Keep track of all direct and non-direct work hours for the preceptor to sign on a weekly basis. (Direct hours are those worked at the facility; indirect hours are those worked outside of the facility but related to projects you have been assigned, for example, development of a training program for employees or updating a patient education booklet). Dietetic interns will not replace any paid employees in the Facility nor will any funds be exchanged between the University and the Facility Excessive tardiness to SP sites may be grounds for termination from the rotation. Attendance policies for the SP site should be reviewed with your preceptor.

Any Dietetic Intern unable to perform in a facility is expected to telephone the mentor/preceptor and the Dietetic Internship Director for each absence day (have someone telephone for you if you are too ill). It is recommended if you leave a voice message to also send an e-mail with information as to how to best contact you. Please follow the directions of the preceptor for communicating any absence or tardy occurrence. An absence is considered unscheduled if the mentor/preceptor and the Dietetic Internship Director are not contacted by phone. Medical documentation of your illness is necessary for an absence of 3 or more consecutive days and may be requested for excessive or patterned absences. It is the Dietetic Intern's responsibility to arrange to make up missed SP experiences. The make-up time must be scheduled at the convenience of the facility and within the time frame set by the Internship Director. Greater than 1- day absence in the same week will require repeating an entire week of supervised practice if feasible for the facility.

Withdrawal from SP Rotation or DI Program due to Illness

If a Dietetic Intern's supervised practice experience must be rescheduled due to medically documented reasons, the Dietetic Intern shall complete the rotation as soon as possible within the next semester at

the discretion of the facility. The submission of appropriate paperwork will follow the same time schedule intervals for performance review once the make-up period begins. A Dietetic Intern not completing a clinical rotation during the semester scheduled will receive an Incomplete for PH9997 (PPC). Incompletes must be completed the following semester or the grade reverts to an F. More than 1 unexcused absence or tardiness during a supervised practice rotation will result in academic disciplinary action up to and including removal from the Dietetic Internship. If a Dietetic Intern must drop out of the DI Program due to an illness or unforeseen circumstances, completion of the DI Program is dependent upon approval by the DI faculty and if within 150% of the 22-month program if adequate SP rotation sites are available.

Dietetic Internship Policies and Procedures

Policy DI 7.0 Professional Behaviors & Appearances

PROFESSIONAL APPEARANCE

Good grooming is one component of professional appearance and includes good health and body cleanliness. Minimum jewelry should be worn during your supervised practice rotations. The SP facility's dress code guidelines will be followed by the Dietetic Intern.

- Scrubs may only be worn if approved by the SP facility's dress code and are the appropriate color.
- Closed toed shoes may be required in certain areas of the facility.
- Body tattoos should be covered during SP experience.
- Facial hair-you may be required to cover with a hairnet.
- Facial piercings will be removed during SP experience.

Hair color is defined as a naturally occurring color. On fieldtrips for didactic courses, professional dress is also required. Inappropriate professional attire is outlined below. The items listed below may not be worn to any of the supervised practice facilities or fieldtrips. If an intern wears them, they will be asked to change clothes or not participate in the day's event(s).

Please note that you are a representative of the UTHSC Dietetic Internship- any event hosted or sponsored by the DI requires professional attire, not just the supervised practice.

Inappropriate Professional Attire: Shorts, cropped pants, jeans, warm-up suits; sweatshirts and sweatpants; flip flops, slides; sheer fabric without undergarments, tops or bottoms that bare the midriff; low-cut tops exposing cleavage, tops with only spaghetti straps which show under garments; un-ironed apparel; any clothing that is too tight or too short; hats or headgear unless related to cultural/religious beliefs or practices.

The Dietetic Intern should obtain a copy of the facility dress code on or before the first day of clinical rotations.

The UTSPH ID Badge should be worn at all times in class, in SP rotations, and on field trips. A clean and pressed white knee-length lab coat and UTSPH student name badge attached to the front of the lab coat should be worn in supervised practice clinical rotations unless otherwise instructed. Clothing under the lab coat should reflect good taste. A deposit for rotation badges may be required.

For SP in food production areas, closed-toed, non-slip shoes and a hair restraint should be worn. Jewelry should meet facility policies. The Dietetic Intern must follow all regulations from the Health Department when working in food service facilities. Fingernails should be short, clean and if a polish is used, it should be clear. **No artificial nails are permitted.**

Eating, chewing gum, and smoking are permitted only in designated areas and at assigned times in supervised practice settings.

The student intern is expected to display the highest standards regarding professional dress and sanitation procedures.

Cellular telephones are suggested, but must be turned off, or on “vibrate,” during class or SP experience. This is a professional courtesy. Many facilities do not allow the use of cellular devices due to the interference with medical equipment. There should be no texting during work hours. Some hospitals will provide the Dietetic Intern with a pager during MNT rotation. These must be returned to the facility at the conclusion of the rotation. Phone calls and/or text messages should only be received during work hours for emergency purposes or as approved by your preceptor.

SUPERVISED PRACTICE EXPECTATIONS AND STANDARDS

Professional behavior is extremely important as you complete rotations at SP facilities. You are a critical link to the continued success of the DI Program. Dietetic Interns will be representing UTHealth at all times. One must endeavor to treat patients, students, employees, administrators, faculty and all other individuals with respect and courtesy. With regard to patients and clients, remember the ethical practice of our profession as follows:

- Patient charts or medical records are privileged information. Dietetic Interns may interpret diet information to the patient, but relaying any other information should be left to the discretion of the patient's physician. Patient charts and all other patient records should be kept out of reach from unauthorized persons. Patient charts cannot be photocopied. (Review HIPAA prior to SP rotations)
- Do not discuss matters pertaining to patients in public places such as elevators, corridors or lounge areas.
- When placed in a facility, follow any additional facility-specific policies concerning patient/client rights.
 - All contact with patients is done only under supervision of a designated UTSPH instructor or the SP preceptor when the Dietetic Intern is placed in SP settings.
- No proprietary materials are to be used or removed from a facility without the consent of the SP preceptor.
- Any documents presented in class or electronically submitted for assignments must have all patient identifiers removed.

Dietetic Internship Policies and Procedures

Policy DI 7.5 Professional Behaviors & Disciplinary Actions

UTHealth reserves the right to discontinue the Dietetic Experience of any intern when it is deemed necessary or appropriate to do so. A Dietetic Intern may be dismissed from the program when there is evidence of inability to function or behave effectively and professionally as an UTHealth intern.

Purpose: To provide the intern the parameters and appropriate notice for being disciplined or terminated when the dietetic intern violates or demonstrates behaviors or actions deemed inappropriate by standards set in the UTHealth Conduct Policy, HIPPA violation, internship site policies or DI policies.

Procedures:

Disciplinary Actions: Inappropriate behavior, unacceptable professional conduct or other issues deemed inappropriate by the Director of the Dietetic Internship, faculty members and/or Preceptor will be brought to the attention of the intern for remediation. If the intern's actions or behavior is deemed grievous enough for immediate dismissal, remediation will not be an option. An appeal process regarding all situations concerning student warning and termination is available and outlined in this policy.

Warning and Termination Process

First Formal Warning

Inappropriate behavior, unacceptable professional conduct or other issues identified by the preceptor, faculty, and/or DI Director will be discussed and a first formal warning with the intern. A formal written warning will be issued at this time in addition to verbal counseling. Discussions with the intern will be held at the location with the internship director calling into a virtual meeting.

The written warning will outline the inappropriate behavior, unacceptable professional conduct, or issues violating UTHealth or site policies. Expectations will be outlined for changes in the intern's behavior, actions, and/or performance, along with a monitoring timeline.

A copy of the warning will be given to the intern, place in the intern's electronic, and paper file. The intern will sign the bottom of the First Formal Warning acknowledging receipt. The intern is informed that signing the warning does not

indicate that the intern agrees with the formal warning. If the intern refuses to sign the document, the DI Director will sign and date the warning statement and indicate on the statement a refusal by intern to sign the warning. Continuation of inappropriate behavior, unacceptable professional conduct, identified issues or policy violations will result in a second formal warning.

Second Formal Warning

Based on the monitoring timeline developed during the First Formal Warning, continued inappropriate behavior, unacceptable professional conduct or other issues will be addressed in a Second Formal Warning. A second warning may include new behavioral issues exhibited by the interns.

A Second Formal Warning will outline clear expectations for changes in the intern's inappropriate behavior, unacceptable professional conduct or other issues, along with a monitoring timeline.

A copy of the second formal warning will be given to the intern and placed in the intern's electronic and paper file. The intern will be asked to sign the warning acknowledging receipt. The intern is informed that signing does not indicate that the intern agrees with the formal warning. If intern fails to sign, document will be signed stating failure and refusal for signing.

Discussions with the intern will be held in the DI Director's office. Continuation of inappropriate behaviors past the timeline outlined in the second formal warning will result in termination.

Termination

Before termination action is taken; the intended termination must be presented to faculty committee for review.

A final internship termination review will be held at UTHealth. When it has been determined that the intern has not made sufficient progress toward correction of identified inappropriate behavior, unacceptable professional conduct or other issues, despite previous formal warnings, the DI Director will hold a final internship termination conference.

The intern will be notified verbally and in writing of termination from the program.

An intern terminate from the UTHealth internship program for inappropriate behavior, unacceptable professional conduct or other issues will not be considered for future internship placements with UTHealth. Dismissal from the

program will be communicated to The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Commission on Dietetic Registration for determination whether the dismissed intern is eligible for entrance into other accredited programs in the future.

Violations of Misconduct may include:

Refusal to follow Policies and Procedures outlined in both the P&P manual and the UTHealth Handbook.

HIPPA violations will be reviewed for possible immediate dismissal.

Examples of inappropriate behavior, unacceptable professional conduct or other issues include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to follow guidelines and ethics in P&P Manual and Handbook
- HIPPA violations, breaking patient, or client confidentiality.
- Violations of site policies and procedures
- Insubordination to supervised practice preceptors or site staff
- Chronic tardiness of over 15 minutes to rotation sites
- Excessive/blatant absenteeism of over 3 days
- Failure to complete pre-rotation work
- Failure to be prepared for rotations
- Leaving the facility without permission
- Theft or pilferage,
- Sleeping while at rotation site
- Working on internship projects or any other work while at supervised rotations sites
- Wearing inappropriate clothing for supervised practice rotation
- Unkempt personal hygiene such as hair, teeth and nails
- Pass due date assignments and evaluations
- Failure to perform or observe any of the terms or provisions of the Internship Agreement

The previously described warning procedures are appropriate for minor offenses that can be identified, monitored, and resolved.

Reporting to hospital locations while under the influence or while impaired by alcohol, illegal substances, prescribed or non-prescribed controlled

substances. will be immediately dismissal from the UTHealth Dietetic Internship regardless of the disciplinary action described above.

Dietetic Internship Policies and Procedures

Policy DI 8.0 Student Dietetic Responsibilities

RESPONSIBILITIES OF INTERNS

- Completing all UTSPH requirements for newly admitted students upon admission (<https://sph.uth.edu/new-students/#TID-e0cbad69-3a05-4a60-ab3a-3210158b97b5> -2 – See Checklist) including a Criminal Background Check (<https://www.uth.edu/registrar/applicants/criminal-background-check>) at the student's expense.
- Providing original copies of DPD Verification statement signed by DPD Director, an official stamped transcript showing undergraduate degree, and current immunization record signed by health practitioner. Immunizations must meet the UTHealth requirements and remain current during SP rotations. A copy of immunization record may be required by supervised practice facilities.
- Personal automobile insurance and transportation to SP facilities (includes gas and parking)
- Meals at SP facilities.
- Following all policies, procedures and regulations of SP facilities.
- Completing any pre-requisite application paperwork, drug screen, criminal background check, or orientation sessions required by assigned SP facilities according to their deadlines for completion and at the intern's expense.
- Reporting on time and following the assigned time schedule. Dietetic Interns may not leave assigned facility areas during SP scheduled time without permission of the SP faculty. Failure to notify the preceptor will result in the loss of SP hours for that day and possible suspension from the rotation. 13
- Contacting the SP preceptor and the UT Health Science Center – Houston DI Director / Asst. Director if an emergency arises. Since this program is very intensive, it is strongly recommended that absenteeism occur only in an emergency.
- Completing assignments on time. This includes evaluations and activity reports. The Dietetic Intern will be advised by faculty of each course as to assignments, requirements and evaluations.
- Keeping a log of hours spent in facilities and/or completing assignments for SP. These logs will be checked by faculty at specified times. Many facilities require Dietetic Interns to log their patient contact hours. This should be completed daily. The logs will serve as a reminder to the Dietetic Intern of the projects and competencies completed.
- Covering the costs (through personal health insurance or personal funds) of any emergency health care delivered at a facility.
- Following the academic scholastic honesty policies and code of conduct for students of the School of Public Health on all homework assignments, papers, or other work submitted.

- Enrolling in a minimum of 1 semester credit of PH 9997 (PPC) during the Supervised Practice rotations in order to maintain the Student Malpractice Insurance coverage and continuous enrollment as a Full-Time graduate student while enrolled in the Dietetic Internship.
 - Paying the Dietetic Internship fee for the semester prior to the first day in a facility for the supervised practice rotation.
 - Providing proof of health insurance to the Director of the Dietetic Internship prior to beginning supervised practice experience. This proof will be placed in your intern file maintained by the Dietetic Internship Program Director. A copy might be requested by one of your supervised practice facilities. Please furnish them upon request.
- Providing proof of COVID 19 vaccinations and boosters when requested. This is a recent addition to the requirements added to the intern's

Dietetic Internship Policies and Procedures

Policy DI 9.0 Handling of Concerns by Dietetic Interns

If the Dietetic Intern has any questions related to the issues addressed in the Dietetic Intern Handbook, they should first address them with the Dietetic Internship Program Director, Co-Director or Assistant Director of the Dietetic Internship. If they are unable to resolve their issues or concerns, the Dietetic Intern is encouraged to contact the UTHSC, Director of the Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living. For unresolved issues the Dietetic Intern may contact the Dean of the School of Public Health and / or The Accreditation Council on Education for Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) at The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND) 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000 Chicago, Illinois 60606-6995 ph: (312) 899-0040 ext. 5400 toll free: 1 + (800) 877-1600 ext. 5400 E-mail: acend@eatright.org

Dietetic Internship Policies and Procedures

Policy DI 10.0 Non-Discrimination Policy

Non-Discrimination Policy

UTHealth School of Public Health strives to create and actively promotes a welcoming and supportive environment in order to recruit, hire and retain a culturally diverse faculty, staff, and internship cohort. UTHealth provides an environment of nondiscrimination and affirmative action for everyone. As part of the UTHealth program for equal opportunity, the policy statement reads as follows:

The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (“university”) is committed to providing a working and learning environment free from discrimination and harassment. The university prohibits discrimination and/or harassment by any member of the university community on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, gender identity or expression, veteran status or any other basis prohibited by law. No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity sponsored or conducted by the university or any of its component entities on any basis prohibited by applicable law or university policy.

To help achieve an environment free from prohibited discrimination and harassment, the university provides anyone who believes they have been subjected to discrimination or harassment a complaint process to address their concerns.

Individuals who engage in conduct that violates this policy are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination and/or dismissal.

<https://www.uth.edu/hoop/policy.htm?id=1448214>

Dietetic Internship Policies and Procedures

Policy DI 11.0 Code of Conduct

Violations of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Code of Ethics

<https://www.eatrightpro.org/-/media/eatrightpro-files/career/code-of-ethics/coeforthenutritionanddieteticsprofession.pdf?la=en&hash=0C9D1622C51782F12A0D6004A28CDAC0CE99A032>

Violation of the AND Code of ethics can result in immediate dismissal from the UTHealth Dietetic Internship Program. It is the intern's responsibility to be knowledgeable and familiar with the "Code".

It is also the intern's responsibility to read the UTHealth Student Handbook and sign that they have read and understand the handbook.

The student has the primary responsibility to be academically honest. In this regard the student is also responsible for the policies and procedures as they are outlined in the University's academic policies.

The faculty of UTHealth Dietetic Internship supports the stated professional ethics and the following standards in various aspects of the internship program.

1. The faculty respects the dignity of each individual with which they are associated.
2. The faculty respect confidence imparted to them.
3. The faculty seeks to maintain an optimal level of safety for all individuals they come in contact with in the didactic and clinical aspects of the program.
4. The faculty assures that any study or educational experiences involving human subjects follow the UTHealth IRB guidelines.
5. The faculty identifies the student's level of competence in skills and communicates this information to the clinical preceptors.

The internship will not tolerate any type of activity considered by the faculty to be cheating or engage in any activity whose intent may be construed as cheating. The following is a list of actions, which may cause dismissal from the program. This list is not considered all-inclusive, and other actions of dishonest nature or construed to be dishonest, may also result in dismissal from the Dietetic program.

1. Students must not cheat on a test or obtain answers from others, by copying the work of others, by obtaining unauthorized material from others, and must ensure that they do not give the appearance of cheating.
2. Students must do their own work and must not plagiarize.
3. Students are not to obtain copies of impending exams prior to the testing, and after an exam, such copies are not to be kept by students unless authorized by instructor.
4. Student should avoid unexcused absences and should not fabricate reasons for absences.
5. Student are not to engage in any unethical, illegal, or dishonest behaviors.

As a comprehensive health science university, the mission of The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston is to educate health science professionals, discover and translate advances in the

biomedical and social sciences, and model the best practices in clinical care and public health. The link below is a set of standards of conduct for both university personnel and students attending UTHealth.

<https://www.uth.edu/hoop/standards-of-conduct-guide.htm>

Dietetic Internship Policies and Procedures

Policy DI 12.0 Completion of Both Dietetic Internship and Master of Public Health

Criteria to Successfully complete both DI and MPH at the UTHealth-SPH

UTHealth is a combined Dietetic Internship Program and Master of Public Health. It is designed to be completed simultaneously.

To successfully complete the internship program and be able to sit for the Registration Examination for Dietitians the following must be satisfied:

1. Successful completion of all internship supervised practice rotations and required hours as stated in the handbook.
2. An 80% or better on all final evaluations during each rotation
3. Successful completion of all graduate courses on the curriculum degree planner.
4. Successful completion of either a Thesis or Integrated Learning Experience (ILE-DI capstone)
5. Submission of all required paperwork to the graduate school on or before announced deadlines.

Upon successful completion of both the MPH and the Dietetic Internship A “Verification Statement of Completion” will be issued to the student. The Verification Statement and a transcript with the University seal and MPH issue is required to take the registration examination for dietitian nutritionist. This completed paperwork is uploaded to CDR so that the student can take the CDR examination for RDN.

Criteria for Licensure in Texas

Students enrolled in programs leading to licensure in Texas or certification nationally must be eligible for licensure according to the law established by that particular State Board of Licensure.

Students will have completed and taken the CDR exam for Dietitians and passed. They are then responsible for taking a module on Human Sex Trafficking in the State of Texas. Once passing that module, the student will pay the required fee to become a Licensed Dietitian in the state of Texas.

In particular, individuals convicted of a felony may not be eligible for licensure or certification in health professions. Students are urged to contact the appropriate licensure or certification agency for further information.

<https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/diet/dietapply.htm>

You must pass two examinations before applying for a Texas license:

1. The Licensed Dietitian Examination given by the Commission on Dietetic Registration
2. The Texas Jurisprudence Examination

For more information on the examination process, please see the [dietitian examinations](#) page.

Dietetic Internship Policies and Procedures

Policy DI 13.0 Selection and Maintaining Supervised Practice Rotations

Supervised practice facilities are selected and periodically evaluated for adequacy and appropriateness to ensure the facilities are able to provide supervised practice learning experiences compatible with the competencies that interns are expected to achieve. Written affiliation agreements are maintained with outside institutions, organizations, and/or agencies (i.e. facilities) providing supervised practice experiences to meet intern competencies.

Procedures:

Selecting and Evaluating Supervised Practice Facilities:

- The majority of supervised practice experiences occur within The Medical Center and their community affiliates.
- Community and School & Hospital Foodservice rotations are within a 50 mile radius of the School of Public Health in The Medical Center
- Supervised Practice Facilities are selected based on the following criteria:
 - Ability to adequately and appropriately provide experiences needed to achieve intern competencies
 - Presence of a preceptor qualified as per current ACEND guidelines and accreditation standards.
 - Ability to establish an Affiliate Agreement as described in this policy
- Supervised practice facilities are evaluated by interns after each rotation experience
- The Internship Director reviews supervised practice facilities and preceptors continually as they are used, but at minimum annually. The Internship Director reviews the interns evaluations of supervised practice facilities and preceptors as they are received throughout the year, periodically visits supervised practice facilities, identifies issues needing improvement and takes appropriate action and steps to encourage the facility and preceptor to make improvements. If the Internship Director determines that the supervised practice facility and/or preceptor is not capable of or not compliant with making needed improvements and/or is no longer appropriately staffed or providing the needed experiences to complete and achieve competencies, the internship director will terminate the relationship with that supervised practice facility.

Affiliate Agreements:

- Affiliation Agreements are required with institutions, organizations, and/or agencies where interns are placed for supervised practice that meet intern competencies and/or that involve the intern providing direct patient care and related tasks.
- The process of establishing affiliation agreements begins well in advance of placing interns at a supervised practice facility to account for the time needed for review of the agreement by both parties.
- Affiliation agreements delineate the following:

- Rights and responsibilities of both the Dietetic Internship (sponsoring organization) and the supervised practice facility (affiliating institution, organization and/or agency)
- Content and competencies covered in the supervised practice experience.
- Timing and length of the supervised practice experience
- Documentation(for example, proof of health insurance, proof of professional liability insurance, immunizations and vaccinations, CPR, ServSafe or equivalent). This can be provided upon request of facility.
- Length of time the agreement is in effect.
- Procedure for terminating the agreement.
- Affiliation agreements are signed by the Executive VP & CEO at UTHealth School of Public Health and the appropriate supervised practice facility administrator who has appropriate authority.
- Affiliation agreements are finalized and signed prior to placing interns at the supervised practice facility.
- Maintenance of affiliate agreements includes annual reviews by internship director to ensure they have not expired and the content is current.
- Affiliation agreements are stored by the Internship Director and will be made available for review by ACEND program reviewers as requested.