

**Coordinated MS in Nutrition and Dietetics  
Supervised Practice Preceptor Handbook  
2024-2025**

Congratulations on your role as a preceptor for the MS Nutrition and Dietetics Program at Pace University! Your contribution is a vital for the education of future Registered Dietitian Nutritionists and essential to sustain the field of dietetics. As you begin this exciting undertaking, you may have questions or seek clarification of your responsibilities as a preceptor. Please utilize this handbook to help guide you and always feel free to reach out to the Clinical Coordinator if you have questions or concerns that are not addressed here. This handbook is reviewed and updated annually. The most recent version is available for preceptors at the start of each rotation.

**Important Contacts:**

Christen C. Cooper EdD, RD  
Assistant Faculty

[Ccooper3@pace.edu](mailto:Ccooper3@pace.edu)

917-224-4595

Jessica Tosto MS, RD, CSP, CDN  
Department Chairperson  
Clinical Coordinator  
Clinical Associate Faculty

[Jtosto@pace.edu](mailto:Jtosto@pace.edu)

914-773-3087

Mary Opfer MS, RD  
Clinical Associate Faculty

[Mopfer@pace.edu](mailto:Mopfer@pace.edu)

914-774-8530

**Nutrition and Dietetics Program – Main Office**

Pace University  
861 Bedford Rd  
Lienhard Hall – Suite 23  
Phone #: 914-773-3113  
[Nutrition@pace.edu](mailto:Nutrition@pace.edu)

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

PROGRAM MISSION ..... 3

PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES ..... 3

THE SUPERVISED PRACTICE EXPERIENCE ..... 4

PROGRESSION OF LEARNING ..... 5

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS ..... 5

PRECEPTOR RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS ..... 5

BENEFITS OF PRECEPTING ..... 6

PRECEPTOR ORIENTATION CHECKLIST..... 6

PRECEPTOR TRAINING ..... 7

CPEUs FOR PRECEPTING ..... 8

CLEARANCE REQUIREMENTS ..... 8

LIABILITY INSURANCE..... 9

DRESS CODE FOR SUPERVISED PRACTICE SITES ..... 9

ROTATION ATTENDANCE ..... 10

POLICIES OF CLINICAL AGENCIES ..... 10

ASSIGNMENTS ..... 10

COMPETENCIES ..... 11

    FOOD SERVICE ROTATION ..... 11

    COMMUNITY ROTATION ..... 12

    CLINICAL ROTATION ..... 12

    ELECTIVE ROTATION ..... 13

EVALUATIONS ..... 13

ACCREDITATION ..... 14

COMPLAINTS ABOUT PROGRAM COMPLIANCE ..... 14

## **PROGRAM MISSION**

The mission of the Pace University Coordinated Master of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics Program (which will also be referred to as the Program in this handbook) is to educate and challenge diverse students to become entry-level Registered Dietitian-Nutritionists (RDN) who will serve as responsible practitioners, leaders, innovators and lifelong educators and make positive impacts on the nutrition outcomes of the public.

With the field of nutrition at a critical time in history, with many challenges and much opportunity ahead, tomorrow's RDs must understand the nation's diversifying population and the role that food plays in a variety of settings and cultures. They must also understand the role of nutrition in preventing and managing disease and be able to utilize scientific evidence accurately and ethically to help clients to eat healthfully.

## **PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

**Goal 1: Graduates will successfully enter the field of nutrition to help meet the demand for RDs nationally and locally.**

### ACEND Objectives

- At least 80% of students complete program requirements within 3 years (150% of planned program length).
- Of graduates who seek employment, at least 70% are employed in nutrition and dietetics or related fields within 12 months of graduation.
- At least 70% of program graduates will take the Commission on Dietetics Registration (CDR) credentialing exam for dietitian-nutritionists within 12 months of Program completion.
- The program's one-year pass rate (graduates who pass the registration exam within one year of first attempt) on the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists is at least 80%.

### Program Specific Objective

- Of program graduates who represent traditionally under-represented groups in dietetics, including men, people of color and speakers of English as a second language, 70% are employed in nutrition and dietetics or related fields within 12 months of graduation.

**Goal 2: Program graduates will be well-prepared for the practice of nutrition and dietetics in a variety of settings.**

ACEND Objectives:

- At least 70% of graduates who respond to a survey will report feeling prepared, well-prepared or extremely well-prepared for their area of practice when surveyed 12 months after graduation (measured on a 5-point scale: 1=poorly prepared; 2=somewhat prepared; 3=adequately prepared; 4=well-prepared; 5=extremely well prepared).
- At least 70% of employers who respond to a survey will rate Program graduates as “competent,” “very competent,” or “extremely competent.” (measured on a 5-point scale with: 1=not competent; 2=fairly competent; 3=competent; 4=very competent; 5=extremely competent).

**THE SUPERVISED PRACTICE EXPERIENCE (DIETETIC INTERNSHIP)**

The Supervised Practice (“internship”) portion of Pace M.S. in Nutrition and Dietetics is designed to satisfy the 1000 hours of hands-on experience in the field required to sit for the RD exam. Didactic training is also required and is satisfied by the Program’s other courses.

Students will proceed through four rotations of varying lengths depending on the rotation setting. Each rotation and the number of hours required are listed below. Students are required to complete the designated number of hours during the allotted timeframe. In the event that hours are not completed, students may make up missing hours during intercessions. Because the University is closed during the Holiday Break between Christmas and New Year’s Day, faculty supervision is not available during that period and therefore students may not attend or make up supervised practice hours during the Holiday Break.

Students are not compensated for supervised practice. Each three-credit supervised practice rotation is viewed as a course. Students should approach their rotations not as time to observe dietitians or supervisors, but as time to practice hands-on dietetic skills under the supervision of Registered Dietitians and Foodservice Managers and/or Directors.

Because they are not licensed to practice nutrition and dietetics without supervision, no student should work as a replacement for an employee. Students should always work under the supervision of a credentialed dietitian or foodservice manager/director.

## **PROGRESSION OF LEARNING**

The supervised practice experience is designed to build intern skills and entry-level competency upon the student's existing foundation of didactic knowledge. Throughout each supervised practice rotation, the goal is to gradually increase the student's level of:

- Responsibility
- Competence
- Proficiency
- Independence

While at first the student may simply observe, he/she should gradually take on increasing portions of the preceptor's role until the student is able to assume all entry-level aspects of the preceptor's job independently. Throughout the rotation, the student should gradually progress from heavily supervised practice to increasing independence and minimal supervision. Responsibilities and problems should progress from basic to complex, and the workload and speed expectations should increase similarly.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS:**

- Arrive to sites on time
- Communicate any absences to Preceptors and Clinical Coordinator as soon as possible
- Be flexible with scheduling
- Be respectful and open to constructive feedback
- Ask questions
- Take initiative
- Ask for resources necessary to complete assigned projects
- Log supervised practice hours frequently and accurately
- Be open to new experiences
- Complete all assignments and projects within the allotted timeframe

## **PRECEPTOR RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS:**

- Provide a general overview and orientation to the site
- Communicate site specific policies, procedures, safety guidelines, and expectations
- Provide an overview of anticipated schedule
- Communicate any changes in scheduling to the student as soon as possible
- Provide opportunities for students to engage in "hands-on" learning activities
- Provide access to any available resources needed for students to complete their assignments
- Provide feedback in a respectful and constructive manner
- Be open and available to the student
- Complete evaluations honestly, impartially and in a timely manner

## **BENEFITS OF PRECEPTING**

Serving as a preceptor can provide a number of benefits to both you and your institution. These benefits may include:

- *Enhanced productivity and project completion* – Often certain projects are placed on hold due to lack of resources and time. Such projects, where appropriate, can be delegated to student interns. Through such projects, students learn and develop competency while making real-life contributions to the supervised practice site.
- *Improved employee morale and performance* – Team members who are given a role in teaching students often feel a greater sense of importance and contribution to the team.
- *Alternative perspectives through fresh eyes* – Students may bring new perspectives to a facility. Often through an intern's questions and a preceptor's expertise, best practices are identified.
- *Challenge and variety* – Student interns can provide variety in the day-to-day routine and challenge the staff and preceptor through their questions and learning process. Learning can be rewarding at all ages and all levels of experience.
- *Professional development opportunities* – Activities that support effective precepting can contribute to the preceptor's portfolio and professional development. Preceptors are also eligible to earn up to 15 CPEU credits per 5-year cycle for precepting students.

## **PRECEPTOR ORIENTATION CHECKLIST**

- ❖ *Upon notification of student placement, review with the student:*
  - Dates and number of hours to be completed at the facility
  - Meeting times and location(s)
  - Dress code
  - Directions to facility
  - Parking
  - Meals and breaks
  - Pre-rotation assignments or readings
  - Resources to bring (e.g., laptop, books, lab coat, etc.)
  - Site-specific trainings or learning modules to be completed prior to start date
- ❖ *Prior to first rotation day, preceptors should review:*
  - Rotation competencies (CRDNs)
  - Program assigned activities and assignments to be completed by the student during the rotation
  - Preceptor Bias Training video (see links on Page 7-8)

- ❖ *Suggested activities for Onboarding:*
  - Provide a tour of facility (if applicable)
  - Introduce student by name to key employees, administrators and/or support staff
  - Set up access to electronic resources: Electronic Health Record (EHR), Software (e.g., CBORD), communication tools (e.g., email platform, intranet)
  - Review resources and tools such as:
    - Pertinent guidelines for use during rotation (e.g., screening and assessment policy for clinical nutrition, foodservice delivery & nourishment)
    - Clinical documentation forms (e.g., MDS, malnutrition screening tool, intake evaluation forms)
    - Policy manuals (e.g., Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), HIPPA, Safety, HACCP, Emergency & Disaster Plans)
  - Discuss a “typical day” at the rotation
  - Review anticipated rotation schedule, including preceptor’s assigned to the student
  
- ❖ *Suggested discussion topics for successful rotation:*
  - Previous experience and rotations already completed
  - Student’s goals for the rotation, personal strengths, and potential challenges
  - Preceptor’s expectations of the student
  - Student’s expectations of the preceptor, department, facility
  - Plans for preceptor-student interaction for observation and feedback (e.g., weekly meetings on Friday to review progress)
  - Expectations regarding communication, professionalism, punctuality, illness, inclement weather
  - Student should disclose any personal issues such as religious observances, personal obligations, and pre-planned personal events that may impact rotation scheduling

## **PRECEPTOR TRAINING**

We sincerely appreciate your willingness to help us in training and supervising Pace University Dietetic Interns. Working with interns is a fulfilling experience, yet it can also be challenging. We recognize the significant commitment and amount of effort required to serve as a preceptor. ACEND® (Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition & Dietetics), our accrediting body, asks that we provide training resources for all our preceptors. Please review the following resources and be sure to download the CPEU certificates for your portfolio records.

*Note: To view the webinars, you may be prompted to download Cisco's WebEx Player application. This webinar cannot be played on mobile devices.*

- ❖ [ACEND Preceptor Training Course](#)  
The Dietetics Preceptor Training Program helps preceptors of dietetics students prepare for and excel in their important role as teachers, coaches and mentors. This training awards 8 complimentary CEUs.

❖ **[DEI Training Webinars for Program Faculty, Students and Preceptors to Meet 2022 Accreditation Standards Requirements](#)**

ACEND® offers a series of webinars to address diversity, equity and inclusion in its accredited programs. The webinars are free and provide 1.5 CPEUs each. This series of four webinars is intended for programs to use within their training of faculty, students and/or preceptors to meet the 2022 Accreditation Standards. All ACEND® stakeholders (faculty, administrators, preceptors, students, interns, etc.) are invited. All sessions will be recorded and made available. Recordings of previous webinars are also available.

**CPEUs FOR PRECEPTING**

As of June 1, 2017, preceptors may record a total of 15 CPEUs per 5-year cycle for precepting and/or leadership on your Activity Log. For more information and to obtain the necessary forms, visit the [Commission on Dietetic Registration](#). Once completed, submit your Preceptor Log Form to the department chair or clinical coordinator for signature.

**CLEARANCE REQUIREMENTS**

Prior to commencing a supervised practice rotation, students must satisfactorily complete all clearance requirements of the College of Health Professions and of each clinical agency where the student has been assigned a rotation. Clearance requirements for clinical courses include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Annual Health Clearance (including immunization/titers, flu shot, PPD placement, COVID vaccination)
- Criminal Background Check
- HIPAA training
- Signed COVID-19 Attestation form
- Any additional site-specific clearance requirements (e.g., drug screening, fingerprinting, additional background checks, required interview, site orientation) should be communicated to the Clinical Coordinator prior to accepting a student placement.
- Sites may also require a COVID-19 test prior to starting a rotation and at various intervals throughout the rotation.

## **LIABILITY INSURANCE**

Pace University carries general and professional liability insurance that includes coverage for all students in the M.S. in Nutrition and Dietetics Program for claims rising from a student's activities in satisfaction of the requirements of his or her academic program, including clinical courses, at the University.

The University's general and professional liability insurance does not cover any claim arising from a student's activities outside of his or her academic programs at the University, including, without limitation, claims arising out of previous or current academic activities at another institution or employment. Also excluded from coverage are any events occurring during transportation to and from program activities, including supervised practice. These insurances apply only to claims brought against the student by third parties; they do not provide coverage for the student if the student is injured or becomes ill from work performed during their clinical course work. It is the student's responsibility to carry personal medical insurance to cover this potential.

On occasion, a supervised practice site may require that students performing a rotation at its site have their own professional liability insurance in addition to that provided by the University. Therefore, prior to accepting a student for supervised practice, the site should communicate to the clinical coordinator whether students at the site are required to have their own professional liability insurance in addition to that provided by the University.

## **DRESS CODE FOR SUPERVISED PRACTICE SITES**

When in a supervised practice setting or in activities related to supervised practice, students are instructed to comply with the dress code below. If your site has specific dress code requirements or standards that are different than the dress code below, please communicate this to the student prior to their first day at your site.

- If the required uniform for a clinical setting is "business casual attire," students may wear pants or skirt with a blouse or collared shirt, or a dress.
- Jeans, denim, shorts, tank tops, T-shirts, open-toe shoes, sandals, flip flops, sweatpants, leggings, yoga pants, sweatshirts, and similar casual clothing is not appropriate in a clinical setting and are never permitted.
- Fingernails must be well groomed, short and clean.
- While in a supervised practice setting, students are required to wear their Pace University photo identification card. In addition, sites may issue a separate identification card and require students to carry or wear them while on site.
- While in a supervised practice setting in a clinical rotation site, students should wear a clean, white laboratory coat.

## **ROTATION ATTENDANCE**

Students who must be absent from a session due to illness or an emergency are required to notify their preceptor as soon as possible. Absences caused by illness or an emergency must be made up at the site at which the student has been placed in accordance with the terms and conditions required by the preceptor and Clinical Coordinator. Excessive absenteeism, even if it is the result of illness or emergencies, may result in a failing grade for that supervised practice rotation. Questions about the requirements of attendance at supervised practice sites should be addressed to the Clinical Coordinator. All students are required to be supervised during their clinical hours. Because the University is closed during the Holiday Break between Christmas and New Year, supervision is not available during that period and therefore students may not attend or make up clinical hours during the Holiday Break.

Students are responsible for tracking and logging their hours weekly in EXXAT. Preceptors will be asked to sign off on the student's logged hours throughout their rotation.

## **POLICIES OF CLINICAL AGENCIES**

Students are bound by applicable policies and procedures of the agencies to which they are assigned. It is the student's responsibility to know and comply with those policies and procedures. Please share any pertinent policy information with the student during the orientation to your site.

## **ASSIGNMENTS:**

Students are responsible for completing projects and activities assigned by the University faculty during each supervised practice rotation. Projects and activities are designed to uniformly assess specific competency regardless of the specific site placement; however the content of each assignment may be tailored to the population served at each site. It is the student's responsibility to complete these assignments within the allotted timeframe. The role of the preceptor is to provide access to resources necessary to complete the assignment, as well as guidance and feedback for the student. University faculty are also available to answer questions and provide feedback on assignments. Additional projects and activities assigned by site preceptors should be discussed with the clinical coordinator to ensure they meet the learning objectives for the rotation.

**COMPETENCIES:**

Students are evaluated on their achievement and demonstration of ACEND specific competencies (CRDN's) in a variety of rotations. University generated assignments and activities as well as on-site activities are evaluated in order to determine that the student is competent in each domain. Certain competencies will be evaluated by faculty and others will be evaluated by preceptors. Descriptions of activities that should be used by preceptors to determine the student's level of performance and competence are provided in the rotation evaluation forms. The competencies that will be evaluated by preceptors in each rotation are included below.

**FOOD SERVICE ROTATION (150hrs/7weeks):**

CRDN 1.1: Select indicators of program quality and/or customer service and measure achievement of objectives.

CRDN 2.7: Apply change management strategies to achieve desired outcomes.

CRDN 3.13: Coordinate procurement, production, distribution and service of goods and services, demonstrating and promoting responsible use of resources.

CRDN 4.1: Participate in management of human resources (such as training and scheduling).

CRDN 4.2: Perform management functions related to safety, security and sanitation that affect employees, customers, patients, facilities and food.

CRDN 4.5: Analyze quality, financial and productivity data for use in planning.

CRDN 4.6: Propose and use procedures as appropriate to the practice setting to promote sustainability, reduce waste and protect the environment

CRDN 4.7: Conduct feasibility studies for products, programs or services with consideration of costs and benefits.

CRDN 4.10: Analyze risk in nutrition and dietetics practice (such as risks to achieving set goals and objectives, risk management plan, or risk due to clinical liability or foodborne illness).

**COMMUNITY ROTATION (300hrs/15weeks):**

CRDN 2.2: Demonstrate professional writing skills in preparing professional communications.

CRDN 3.7: Demonstrate effective communication and documentation skills for clinical and client services in a variety of formats and settings, such as telenutrition and other information.

CRDN 3.8: Design, implement and evaluate presentations to a target audience.

CRDN 3.9: Develop nutrition education materials that are culturally and age appropriate and designed for the literacy level of the audience.

CRDN 3.10: Use effective education and counseling skills to facilitate behavior change.

CRDN 3.12: Deliver respectful, science-based answers to client questions concerning emerging trends.

**CLINICAL ROTATION (350hrs/15weeks):**

CRDN 1.2: Evaluate research and apply evidence-based guidelines, systematic reviews and scientific literature in nutrition and dietetics practice.

CRDN 1.4: Conduct projects using appropriate research or quality improvement methods, ethical procedures and data analysis using current and/or new technologies.

CRDN 1.5: Incorporate critical thinking skills in overall practice.

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

CRDN 2.3: Demonstrate active participation, teamwork and contributions in group settings.

CRDN 2.4: Function as a member of inter-professional teams.

CRDN 2.5: Work collaboratively with NDTRs and/or support personnel in other disciplines.

CRDN 2.6: Refer clients and patients to other professionals and services when needs are beyond individual scope of practice.

CRDN 2.11: Show cultural humility in interactions with colleagues, staff, clients, patients, and the public.

CRDN 2.12: Implement culturally sensitive strategies to address cultural biases and differences.

CRDN 3.1: Perform medical nutrition therapy by utilizing the Nutrition Care Process including use of standardized nutrition terminology as part of the clinical workflow elements for individuals, groups and populations of differing ages and health status, in a variety of settings.

CRDN 3.2: Conduct nutrition focused physical exams.

CRDN 3.4: Provide instructions to patients/clients for self-monitoring blood glucose considering diabetes medication and medical nutrition therapy plan.

CRDN 3.5: Explain the steps involved and observe the placement of nasogastric or nasoenteric feeding tubes; if available, assist in the process of placing nasogastric or nasoenteric feeding tubes.

CRDN 3.6: Conduct a swallow screen and refer to the appropriate health care professional for full swallow evaluation when needed.

CRDN: 4.3: Conduct clinical and client service quality management activities (such as quality improvement or quality assurance projects).

CRDN 4.4: Apply current nutrition informatics to develop, store, retrieve and disseminate information and data.

**ELECTIVE ROTATION (200hrs/13weeks):**

CRDN 2.10: Demonstrate professional attributes in all areas of practice.

CRDN 4.9: Explain the process for coding and billing for nutrition and dietetics services to obtain reimbursement from public or private payers, fee-for-service and value-based payment systems.

**EVALUATIONS:**

Evaluations must be completed at the end of each rotation based on the student’s overall performance as well as the content of the various activities and assignments completed. Mid-point evaluations may also be required for rotations greater than 200 hours. Designated preceptors will receive the evaluation electronically about 2 weeks prior to the end of the rotation. If you receive an evaluation request and you feel you are not the correct person to complete that evaluation, please contact the student and/or clinical coordinator so that we may send the evaluation to the correct person. Evaluations are necessary to determine if the student successfully met all required competencies and “passed” the rotation. Please complete them within 5 days of the final rotation day.

**Note: A score of 3 or better is required to “pass” each competency and rotation. Any competency scored less than 3 requires a comment to explain the deficiency. Students will be required to complete remediation activities in order to ensure they are able to demonstrate competency.**

Competency Evaluation Rubric					
5 Exceeds Expectations	4 Proficient	3 Competent	2 Limited	1 Deficient	N/O
Application of knowledge, professional behavior, ethics, and skills are indistinguishable from an entry-level practitioner when meeting requirements and expectations of the activities and assignments.	Meets all expectations. Demonstrates sound knowledge, confidence, and effectively applies entry-level skills; seeks assistance after investigating all possible solutions. Practices with little to no guidance or supervision needed.	Meets expectations. Requires minimal supportive or directive cues to apply principles; works independently at acceptable standards. Demonstrates effective use of entry-level skills.	Requires frequent supportive cues; identifies principles but needs direction to identify application.  A remediation plan will be developed.	Requires frequent support and directive cues. Needs direction to consistently identify principles and application.  A remediation plan will be developed.	Not observed in this rotation

Students are also required to evaluate the supervised practice site and preceptors at the end of each rotation. Evaluation feedback will be shared with site managers/directors and/or preceptors once the student has completed the rotation and received their preceptor evaluation(s). Preceptors are encouraged to discuss any questions/concerns pertaining to the evaluations with the clinical coordinator.

## ***ACCREDITATION***

Pace University's Coordinated Program in Nutrition and Dietetics is fully accredited by the Accreditation Council for Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND), the accreditation agency of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND). For further information, contact ACEND by email (ACEND@eatright.org), phone (1-800-877-1600 x5400), or mail (120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190, Chicago, IL 60606-6995).

## **COMPLAINTS ABOUT PROGRAM COMPLIANCE WITH ACCREDITATION STANDARDS**

Students, preceptors or others who wish to register a complaint about the Program in Nutrition and Dietetics should contact the Associate Dean for Administration of the College of Health Professions. Complaints will be handled impartially and without retaliation. Records of complaints will be kept on file for a period of seven years.

If a complaint pertaining to program compliance with ACEND accreditation standards has been addressed by the Program in Nutrition and Dietetics and the administration of the College of Health Profession and still remains unresolved, the individual filing the complaint may contact ACEND in writing. This action should be taken only once all other avenues for resolution at the College level are exhausted.

ACEND® can be contacted by:

**Email:** [ACEND@eatright.org](mailto:ACEND@eatright.org)

**Phone:** 800/877-1600, ext. 5400

**Mail:** 120 South Riverside Plaza  
Suite 2190, Chicago, IL 60606-6995