Dietetic Interns and Preceptors

Policy & Procedure Manual
2013- 2014

Texas A&M University Kingsville
Dietetic Internship
SECTION I – GENERAL OVERVIEW

Dietetic Interns and Preceptors

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2013-2014

Texas A&M University-Kingsville

Dietetic Internship
DIETETIC INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

PHILOSOPHY

Dietitians need diverse skills to provide nutritional care in a complex and rapidly changing managed health care environment. The Texas A&M University-Kingsville Dietetic Internship in Human Sciences Program (TAMUK DI) is based on the philosophy that entry-level professionals have had opportunities to develop skills to meet the needs of diverse clients in a variety of settings. Special emphasis is placed on meeting the needs of the South Texas population composed primarily of Hispanics with varying socio-economic status and literacy skills. This internship allows student interns from all over the country to obtain the practical experience working with a diverse population in South Texas.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Texas A&M University-Kingsville DI is to develop well-rounded leaders and critical thinkers who can provide nutrition education and medical nutrition therapy to solve nutrition related health problems in an ethnically and culturally diverse community. Interns who successfully complete the program are eligible to apply to take the Commission on Dietetic Registration’s (CDR) exam to become Registered Dietitians (RD).

TAMUK DI GOALS

The TAMUK DI is designed to prepare graduates who:

1. Competency in the core discipline of dietetics and the concentration of medical nutrition therapy (MNT)
2. To be employed as registered dietitians and help to meet the need of ethnically and culturally diverse community
3. To deliver nutrition services to diverse patients/clients and community groups in a variety of settings, with emphasis to those of the Hispanic culture and those with low-literacy skills.
4. To have opportunities to develop ethical standards and problem solving, critical-thinking, collaboration, communication, electronic technology, and leadership skills
5. To provide leadership by active participation in the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Association and other local, state, and national professional organizations.

ACCREDITATION STATUS

The Texas A&M University-Kingsville Dietetic Internship is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, 120 South Riverside Plaza, Chicago, IL 60606-6985. (800)-877-1600, ext.5400.

DIETETIC INTERNSHIP COMPETENCIES

Competency statements specify what the interns should be able to do after completing the TAMUK DI. All interns across the country must complete the core competencies. In addition all internships have a specialty concentration. Medical Nutrition Therapy is the specialty concentration of the TAMUK DI. To
fulfill this concentration, the interns will complete concentration competencies CC 1.1, CC 1.2, CC 1.3

During your practicum you will perform activities at different levels. You will see the following terms, assist, perform, consult, supervise, and manage in your assignments. The action verbs reflect four levels of performance. The higher level of performance assumes the ability to perform at the lower level:

1. **Assist** - independently perform under supervision, or *participate*—take part in team activities;

2. **Perform** - able to initiate activities without direct supervision, or *conduct*—activities performed independently;

3. **Consult** - able to perform specialized functions that are discrete, delegated activities intended to improve the work of others, or *supervise*—able to oversee daily operation of a unit including personnel, resource utilization, and environmental issues; or, coordinate and direct the activities of a team or project workgroup;

4. **Manage**—able to plan, organize, and direct an organizational unit through actual or simulated experiences, including knowing what questions to ask.

**Medical Nutrition Therapy Competencies**

**CC 1.1:** Integrate patho-physiology into medical nutrition therapy recommendations for specific patients/clients with advanced needs at the children’s hospital.

**CC 1.2:** Conduct counseling and education for patients/clients and family with special needs, i.e. diabetes, renal disease at the children’s hospital.

**CC 1.3:** Manage staff to oversee nutrition care for diverse population groups from infancy to children.

Texas A&M University-Kingsville Core Competency Focus

Texas A&M University-Kingsville Dietetic Internship program is focused toward MNT. Clinical rotations make up a bulk of student’s internship training (15 weeks). The concentration competency focus of the internship builds upon the following core competencies: DI 3.1 a-d

**Competencies/Learning Outcomes for DI Programs**

Summary of core competencies assignments are included in the tab 3—portfolio of clinical notebooks.

The goal of the program is 100% of interns will receive a minimum grade of 80% on the nutrition care process and three domains (clinical, food service, and community) and on all assignments. Further, 100% of interns will receive a minimum grade of 80% on core competencies and concentration competencies. It must be emphasized that in order for the dietetic interns to receive a verification statement, all students must have averaged a letter grade of B or better in the DI core course requirements including the internship rotations.

Detailed competency standards and learning outcomes are included the COMPETENCY STANDARDS FOLDER which is separated from the manual due to margins and flexibility of usage.

1. **Scientific and Evidence Base of Practice:** integration of scientific information and research into practice.

Upon completion of the DI, graduates are able to:

DI 1.1 Select appropriate indicators and measure achievement of clinical, programmatic, quality,
productivity, economic or other outcomes

DI 1.2 Apply evidence-based guidelines, systematic reviews and scientific literature (such as the ADA Evidence Analysis Library, Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, National Guideline Clearinghouse Web sites) in the nutrition care process and model and other areas of dietetics practice

DI 1.3 Justify programs, products, services and care using appropriate evidence or data

DI 1.4 Evaluate emerging research for application in dietetics practice

DI 1.5 Conduct research projects using appropriate research methods, ethical procedures and statistical analysis

2. Professional Practice Expectations: beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviors for the professional dietitian level of practice.

Upon completion of the DI, graduates are able to:

DI 2.1 Practice in compliance with current federal regulations and state statutes and rules, as applicable and in accordance with accreditation standards and the ADA Scope of Dietetics Practice Framework, Standards of Professional Performance and Code of Ethics for the Profession of Dietetics

DI 2.2 Demonstrate professional writing skills in preparing professional communications (e.g. research manuscripts, project proposals, education materials, policies and procedures)

DI 2.3 Design, implement and evaluate presentations considering life experiences, cultural diversity and educational background of the target audience

DI 2.4 Use effective education and counseling skills to facilitate behavior change

DI 2.5 Demonstrate active participation, teamwork and contributions in group settings

DI 2.6 Assign appropriate patient care activities to dietetic technicians, registered (DTRs) and/or support personnel considering the needs of the patient/client or situation, the ability of support personnel, jurisdictional law, practice guidelines and policies within the facility

DI 2.7 Refer clients and patients to other professionals and services when needs are beyond individual scope of practice

DI 2.8 Demonstrate initiative by proactively developing solutions to problems.

DI 2.9 Apply leadership principles effectively to achieve desired outcomes

DI 2.10 Serve in professional and community organizations

DI 2.11 Establish collaborative relationships with internal and external stakeholders, including patients, clients, care givers, physicians, nurses and other health professionals, administrative and support personnel to facilitate individual and organizational goals

DI 2.12 Demonstrate professional attributes such as advocacy, customer focus, risk taking, critical thinking, flexibility, time management, work prioritization and work ethic within various
organizational cultures

DI 2.13 Perform self assessment, develop goals and objectives and prepare a draft portfolio for professional development as defined by the Commission on Dietetics Registration

DI 2.14 Demonstrate assertiveness and negotiation skills while respecting life experiences, cultural diversity and educational background

3. Clinical and Customer Services: development and delivery of information, products and services to individuals, groups and populations

Upon completion of the DI, graduates are able to:
DI 3.1 Perform the Nutrition Care Process (a through d below) and use standardized nutrition language for individuals, groups and populations of differing ages and health status, in a variety of settings

DI 3.1.a Assess the nutritional status of individuals, groups and populations in a variety of settings where nutrition care is or can be delivered

DI 3.1.b Diagnose nutrition problems and create problem, etiology, signs and symptoms (PES) statements

DI 3.1.c Plan and implement nutrition interventions to include prioritizing the nutrition diagnosis, formulating a nutrition prescription, establishing goals and selecting and managing intervention

DI 3.1.d Monitor and evaluate problems, etiologies, signs, symptoms and the impact of interventions on the nutrition diagnosis

DI 3.2 Develop and demonstrate effective communications skills using oral, print, visual, electronic and mass media methods for maximizing client education, employee training and marketing

DI 3.3 Demonstrate and promote responsible use of resources including employees, money, time, water, energy, food and disposable goods.

DI 3.4 Develop and deliver products, programs or services that promote consumer health, wellness and lifestyle management merging consumer desire for taste, convenience and economy with nutrition, food safety and health messages and interventions

DI 3.5 Deliver respectful, science-based answers to consumer questions concerning emerging trends

DI 3.6 Coordinate procurement, production, distribution and service of goods and services

DI 3.7 Develop and evaluate recipes, formulas and menus for acceptability and affordability that accommodate the cultural diversity and health needs of various populations, groups and individuals

4. Practice Management and Use of Resources: strategic application of principles of management and systems in the provision of services to individuals and
Upon completion of the DI, graduates are able to:

DI 4.1 Use organizational processes and tools to manage human resources

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

DI 4.3 Apply systems theory and a process approach to make decisions and maximize outcomes

DI 4.4 Participate in public policy activities, including both legislative and regulatory initiatives

DI 4.5 Conduct clinical and customer service quality management activities

DI 4.6 Use current informatics technology to develop, store, retrieve and disseminate information and data

DI 4.7 Prepare and analyze quality, financial or productivity data and develop a plan for intervention

DI 4.8 Conduct feasibility studies for products, programs or services with consideration of costs and benefits

DI 4.9 Obtain and analyze financial data to assess budget controls and maximize fiscal outcomes

DI 4.10 Develop a business plan for a product, program or service including development of a budget, staffing needs, facility requirements, equipment and supplies

DI 4.11 Complete documentation that follows professional guidelines, guidelines required by health care systems and guidelines required by the practice setting

DI 4.12 Participate in coding and billing of dietetics/nutrition services to obtain reimbursement for services from public or private insurers
SECTION II - INTERNS

Dietetic Interns and Preceptors

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Texas A&M University-Kingsville

Dietetic Internship Program
DESCRIPTION OF TAMUK DI

The Department of Human Sciences offers Dietetic Internship with graduate level coursework. Students who have a Bachelor degree and verification statement from the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) can apply to the TAMUK DI.

Interns are required to take a minimum of six hours of graduate work in Human Sciences (HSCI 5352 and HSCI 5353) in Summer Session II starting the first week of July before beginning their Internship rotation in August. HSCI 5352 and HSCI 5353 can only be taken at TAMUK. No graduate course substitution will be allowed as HSCI 5352 and HSCI 5353 are part of TAMUK Dietetic Internship Program. The TAMUK DI provides 18 graduate credit hours that can be applied toward the 36 graduate credit hours required to complete the Master of Science in Human Sciences. Applicants with a master’s degree can be accepted into the internship; however, the eighteen hours of graduate coursework is required and no substitutions are allowed.

HSCI 5352 and HSCI 5353 are taught on the Kingsville campus Summer II (first week of July). Each course earns three graduate credit hours. Interns must achieve a grade of “C” or higher in HSCI 5352 and HSCI 5353 in order to begin HSCI 5650. Interns not achieving a minimum of “C” should withdraw from HSCI 5650 and would need to re-apply and be re-accepted into the internship if they want to continue. HSCI 5650 provides 30 weeks of practical experience for which an intern earns 12 hours of graduate credit over two semesters. Interns will complete 32 hours of practical experience per week (1,200 hours of internship per year) which is supervised by registered dietitians or other trained professionals under the direction of the internship director.

Most rotations will be in Corpus Christi for the interns assigned to that locale. Victoria interns will complete most of their rotations in their locale and will live there during the internship. Recently, Harlingen Medical Center, Kindred Hospital, Laredo Specialty Hospital, Doctors Hospital of Laredo joined our program as rotation sites for clinical and for food service. Rotations consist of the following: Medical Nutrition Therapy: 15 weeks; Food Service Management: 8 weeks; and Community Nutrition: 7 weeks. Interns assigned to Harlingen, Laredo, and Victoria can live in the Kingsville/Corpus Christi area during Summer Session II. Supervised practice experiences begin after completion of HSCI 5352 and HSCI 5353.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENT TO DIETETIC INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Minimum Admission Standards
1. GPA of at least 3.0 and DPD GPA of at least 3.0 or higher
2. Verification Statement before the first day of the internship
3. Students should document GPA of 3.0 or higher in last sixty credit hours
4. Accepted by TAMUK graduate school
5. GRE score of 290 is required as a pre-requirement before Summer school begins. Courses offered during the summer school are HSCI 5352 and HSCI 5353.
6. A minimum of six hours of graduate work (HSCI 5352 and HSCI 5353 with a minimum grade of “C” before the internship rotation begins.
7 Certification for food handlers should be obtained before the internship begins.

However, to guarantee DI-slot, students are encouraged to have a GRE score of 290 at a time applying to the DI program.
Attainment of these minimum requirements does not guarantee admission to the program. Admission decisions are based on assessments of all aspects of the student’s application materials. We reserve the right to increase standards if warranted by enrollment limitations, by the number, and by quality of applicants.

**COMPUTER MATCHING PROCESS**

This program participates in the D&D computer matching program. Therefore, students need to submit materials for matching to D&D by the specified deadline. D&D can be accessed at the following website: [http://www.dnddigital.com](http://www.dnddigital.com). Acceptance into the internship is based on a department review and ranking of candidates' qualifications.

**Student’s folder**

The student’s folder must be completed before the student is allowed to start either the clinical, food service, or community rotation begin.

The folder should contain the following information

1. Vaccinations
2. Health insurance
3. Background check
4. Valid driver’s license
5. Drug screening
6. Official Original transcripts with the degree confer date posted in the transcript.
7. Original Verification Statement prior to start of program.
8. Certification for food handlers

**INTERNSHIP SCHEDULE**

Each student will receive their rotation schedules once the student folder is complete. The internship director schedules each student in accordance to the site availability.

**DAILY WORK SCHEDULE**

Interns are to work at least 32 hours per week. At times, students may have to work beyond 32 hours to 40 hours per week to complete their assignments. Sometimes students may need to leave a facility to attend scheduled presentations. The daily work schedule can vary from one site to another. Dietetic Interns are scheduled to attend various sites to learn from the preceptor and the staff. Scheduling interns to various sites does not imply replacing an employee by interns. Rather, the intern position at a site is in addition to the existing employee schedule and not a substitute for employee’s schedule.
Internship course requirements

Summer
Nutrition Care Management I HSCI 5352 3 hours
Nutrition Care Management II HSCI 5353 3 hours

Fall
Practicum in Nutritional Care Management I and II HSCI 5650 6 hours

Spring
Practicum in Nutritional Care Management I and II HSCI 5650 6 hours

TUITION, FEES AND OTHER COSTS
The following costs of the internship are estimates and subject to change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated Expenses</th>
<th>Estimated Expenses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Texas Resident</td>
<td>Non-Resident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Tuition/fees for 18 Hours *</td>
<td>4199.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. DI Application fee (includes mal-practice insurance)</td>
<td>75.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Application fee to grad school</td>
<td>35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Books including summer classes</td>
<td>500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Medical insurance</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics membership</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Laboratory coats or uniforms, nametags</td>
<td>150.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Medical exam</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Background check and drug test</td>
<td>120.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. 10 month estimate for housing, car, etc</td>
<td>5,500.00-8,500.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Other miscellaneous expenses (including name tag)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>12,151.04-15,151.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The cost is approximation for 18 credit hours. The quotations are estimation and may not be exact. Dietetic interns are required to complete 18 hours of graduate coursework for verification (HSCI 5352, 5353, for three credit hours each and HSCI 5650 for 12 credit hours.
- *It is expected that each student to have a lap-top computer as many sites would require each student to work on their computer*
Applying to Graduate Program for Admission

To apply online,
go to [WWW.applytexas.org](http://WWW.applytexas.org) and apply to the graduate program in Human Sciences [Apply Texas Application](http://WWW.applytexas.org).

Domestic application inquiries should be directed to the Office of Admissions by calling 361-593-2315, email at: [admissions@tamuk.edu](mailto:admissions@tamuk.edu) or using the postal address below:

Office of Admissions
MSC 128
Kingsville, TX 78363-8202

It is the university requirement for all graduate students to have completed the GRE by the end of their first semester as a graduate student.

For International Applicants

[Application](http://WWW.applytexas.org) (Apply Texas Application)
[Application](http://WWW.applytexas.org) (PDF)
[Admission Procedures Brochure](http://WWW.applytexas.org) (HTML)
[Application Checklist](http://WWW.applytexas.org) (PDF)
[Financial Statement Form](http://WWW.applytexas.org) (PDF)
[Sample Sponsor Letter](http://WWW.applytexas.org) (PDF)
[Deferment of Admission](http://WWW.applytexas.org) (PDF)
[International Student Status Transfer Form if Currently in the U.S.](http://WWW.applytexas.org) (PDF)

If you have additional questions contact the address below:

College of Graduate Studies
Texas A&M University-Kingsville
MSC 118. 700 University Blvd.
Kingsville, Texas 78363-8202
Fax: (361) 593-3412
Phone: (361) 593-2808
Financial Aid, scholarship, and loans are available at the links below. For students requiring financial assistance, they are encouraged to contact the university as soon as possible.

**General Information:**

**Hours**  
Monday – Tuesday 8:00 am - 7:00 pm  
Wednesday – Friday 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

**Location:**  
Memorial Student Union Building

**Telephone:**  
1.800.687.6000  
1.361.593.3911

**Fax:**  
1.361.593.3026

**Email:** [financial.aid@tamuk.edu](mailto:financial.aid@tamuk.edu)

*Other related links*  
[www.tamuk.edu/finaid](http://www.tamuk.edu/finaid)  
[www.tamuk.edu/sanantonio/welcomecenter/financialaid.asp](http://www.tamuk.edu/sanantonio/welcomecenter/financialaid.asp)

**REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION AND RECEIPT OF VERIFICATION STATEMENT**

Upon successful completion of the internship, students will receive Verification Statement stating that the dietetic internship requirements have been fulfilled and that the student is eligible to sit for the dietetic registration exam. To receive a verification statement, interns must complete all requirements, nutritional classes, and rotations and follow the policies and procedures of the internship and facilities. **Interns must achieve a minimum grade of B for practical experiences (HSCI 5650) and an overall 3.0 grade point average for the 18 graduate credit hours required in the internship. Interns must also complete a practice exam, which will help prepare them for the dietetics registration exam.** Interns meeting these requirements will receive a verification statement and are eligible to sit for the registration exam.

To be verified, interns must also comply with policies and procedures of the dietetic internship as specified in this manual as well as the policies and procedures established by all affiliating institutions. It is important that students familiarize themselves with all policies and procedures of the internship and all facilities. Additionally all resources signed out from the university must be returned before the verification statement and RD registration eligibility is sent to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND). The policies of the internship are written in the following section.

**PROCESS TO BECOME CREDENTIALED**

To become credentialed as a registered dietitian (R.D.), a student must complete a post-baccalaureate dietetic internship and pass the national registration examination for dietitians. To be licensed to practice dietetics in the state of Texas, the requirements of the Texas State Department of Health must be met.

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

As a dietetic intern and a graduate student, you have the rights and responsibilities of all TAMUK students. The *Student Handbook* for Texas A&M University-Kingsville is available to all students. Interns must follow all policies and procedures of the university, the dietetic internship, and its affiliations as written in the above handbook. You are required to read and adhere to the policies pertaining to sexual harassment, grievance procedure, alcohol and drug policies, as described in the *Student Handbook*.  

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Liability Insurance: Interns are not required to purchase malpractice insurance. Application fee will cover the malpractice insurance.

Personal Injury: Verification of both health and liability (auto) insurance must be provided to all facilities. Interns are responsible for any personal injuries incurred at any site during the internship. Interns must sign a release form stating that they understand the policies stated in this Handbook and the policy that they cannot hold liable Texas A&M University-Kingsville and the sponsoring affiliates in this internship. Students are responsible for any injury or illness while rotating through a supervised practice facility.

Health: A current letter from a physician stating that you are in good physical health is required. Interns are required to obtain health insurance if coverage is not afforded by parents’ or spouse’s health insurance. Insurance can be obtained through Texas A&M University-Kingsville.

Shots/Tests: Interns will need a current TB test (within a year), Pertussis, meningitis, PPD, MMR, rubella and varicella titers, and a Hepatitis B series (series of shots over six months), and flu vaccine. Interns are required to have a TB test and a 10-panel drug screen performed within 30 days of beginning their rotation there. The TB test can also be obtained at the Texas A&M University Kingsville Student Health Center (361) 593-2904 on campus. Copies of reports are to be provided to the internship director July 9th or earlier and to the hospital preceptors, as requested. Rubella & Hep. B series may also be available at the TAMUK clinic. All immunizations must have confirmation date

Background Check: A background check ($65) is required of all interns. The service used by the Internship is www.mybackgroundcheck.com. This service can also arrange for the drug screening ($35) required by Corpus Christi Hospital. In addition, Corpus Christi State School and the Veteran’s Administration will conduct their own background checks and the two facilities will handle the cost appropriate for the background check.

Travel: Interns must have a valid driver’s license and automobile insurance or the ability to travel to all assigned facilities via public or private transportation. Interns are responsible for their own reliable transportation to and from class and facilities. The internship and sponsoring facilities are not liable for accidents which occur while students are traveling to and from assigned areas. Interns should have a proof of clean Driver License with no DUI citation.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

In compliance with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Executive Order 11246, Texas A&M University-Kingsville is open to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin or qualified handicap who are otherwise eligible for admission as interns. Furthermore, Texas A&M University-Kingsville is an Equal Opportunity /Affirmative Action Employer and no applicant or employee will be discriminated against because of race, color, age, religion, sex, national origin or non-job related physical or mental handicap in any personnel action. This University will not enter knowingly into contractual agreements for services or supplies with any firm failing to follow fair employment practices. Texas A&M University-Kingsville does not discriminate on the basis of handicap in admission or access to its internships.
ACCESS TO STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

As full time graduate students, interns have all student services that are available to other graduate students. The university provides a number of services for the university community. These services, which include Health Care and Wellness, Counseling Services, Services for Students with Disabilities and Veterans Services are more fully described in the Texas A&M University-Kingsville Student Handbook planner.

Texas A&M University-Kingsville complies with the American’s with Disabilities Act. Special arrangements are made to accommodate you with any type of disability. **If you need special accommodations in the classroom due to disabilities you should inform the internship director before June 1 prior to beginning the internship.** To qualify for services from Services for Students with Disabilities, you must apply and be accepted for admission to TAMUK through the regular admission process; provide current and comprehensive documentation of a temporary or permanent disability that requires accommodation; and schedule an initial interview with the Disabled Student Services coordinator or counselor to discuss needs and to register for services. Interns should provide authorized documentation of their disability and their needs and register for necessary assistance and services by the same date with the Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Center for Life Services and Wellness. If a student wishes to be screened for learning disabilities, the Center for Life Services and Wellness offers the following: basic screening (free) diagnostic assessment ($30.00 fee) and a feedback and interpretative session. The phone number is (361) 593-3991. See The Texas A&M University-Kingsville Student Handbook Planner for more details.

PROTECTION OF PRIVACY OF INFORMATION

Information pertaining to interns is confidential. This includes transcripts of grades, letters of recommendation and application to internship as well as evaluations and comments by preceptors and internship director for all classes and rotations. Files are kept in locked file cabinets in the Dietetic Internship Director's office. Only the secretary and Internship Director will have access to the files.

ACCESS TO PERSONAL FILES

Personal files can be accessed in the director's office upon request. Files will be kept in the Director's office located in the Human Sciences Building on the Texas A&M University-Kingsville campus and can be accessed with permission of Internship Director. The files must be read in the office reception area and returned promptly. They are not to be removed from the Human Sciences building.

VACATION, HOLIDAY, AND ABSENCE POLICIES

The internship provides 1,200 hours of supervised practice in the facilities. This amount of time has been carefully documented in scheduled rotations and interns must satisfy these hours in order to meet requirements of the internship.

The following days are allowed for holidays, sick leave, bereavement, and personal and professional leave but you must make up this time in order to fulfill requirements of the rotation. Make-up schedules will be arranged with the preceptor and internship director on an individual basis.

**Internship Schedule:** The dietetic internship does not follow the academic calendar for the university. The internship begins prior to the start of the academic classes in August and prior to the start of the academic classes in January.
**Holidays:** Interns will be off on Thanksgiving Day (unless they are completing clinical rotation). It is the responsibility of the student to request and arrange time off from the preceptor. The holiday time off is at a discretion of the preceptor.

**Sick Leave:** The internship director needs to be notified if an illness is longer than two days as rescheduling will need to be arranged so the work can be completed. Interns are required to promptly notify their preceptor (2 hours prior to time of duty) of any illness and absence from duty. You may need to repeat rotations for extended illnesses beyond two days. Therefore, rotations would need to be repeated beyond the 26 weeks stipulated by the internship or during holidays.

**Bereavement:** Three days for bereavement are allowed for death of immediate family members. The director and preceptor must be notified as soon as possible. Interns will need to make up these days.

**Personal and Professional Leave:** A total of three days is allowed for personal and professional leave, but all absences must be made up. Requests for personal or professional leave must be submitted at least one week in advance.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Prompt attendance is mandatory at all rotations and classes. Interns must promptly contact the director, instructors, and preceptors if you are going to be unavoidably delayed for class, rotation assignment or if you cannot be present.

**E-MAIL & TELEPHONE**

*Interns are responsible to check e-mail daily* and promptly provide information requested by the internship director. Current e-mail and telephone numbers need to be provided to the Internship Director and preceptors.

**ROTATION SCHEDULES**

In order to meet requirements of the curriculum and Standards of Education, the master rotation schedule will be strictly followed. See policy above for sickness, bereavement and personal and professional leave. Any changes in scheduling must have approval of the internship director.

**GROOMING AND DRESS CODE**

1. Immaculate grooming and daily personal hygiene are essential because of close proximity to patients and others.

2. Hair must be controlled, clean, and worn off the face in a conservative style.

3. Facial hair for men must be clean and trimmed.

4. Simple make-up and clean short nails are expected in the clinical setting. Clear or light colored nail polish may be worn.

5. Since odors of any kind may be offensive to patients, products with strong odors should be avoided while working in clinical setting, i.e. perfumes, etc.

6. Gum is not to be chewed in the clinical setting.
7. Jewelry should be restricted to wedding rings, wristwatch and simple post earrings for pierced ears.

8. Additional criteria may be defined and enforced by the preceptors in clinical areas. Failure to meet any of the above criteria may result in the student being excused from the clinical area.

**Dress codes are for all internship classes and rotations.** Interns are to maintain a professional and business-like image by being appropriately dressed and well groomed. Interns should have at least two lab jackets; lab jackets can be short or long. A long lab jacket is recommended, as it will protect clothing during food service rotations. Interns will be required to wear a nametag with their name with “Dietetic Intern” below the name and "Texas A&M University-Kingsville" with its logo. Alternately, interns may have the lab coats embroidered with the same information exclusive of the logo.

**Women**
Clean, pressed, white-lab coat of a tailored style with long sleeves. Professional dresses (not party dresses) or skirts with conservative tone nylons or slacks with blouses, (avoid low necklines) are to be worn with the lab coat. Dark or conservative polished closed toe shoes should be worn. Heels should be less then two inches. Boots, sandals, and platform shoes are not acceptable. The nametag should be placed on the left breast pocket. Slacks may be worn, but avoid low rise pants.

**Men**
Dark slacks with leather belts and long/short sleeved dress shirts of conservative cut and a tie must be worn. A jacket length white lab coat with designated name pin and emblem or embroidered as described above should also be worn. Dark or conservative dress-type shoes and dress socks must be worn. Boots and sandals are not acceptable.

It is expected that each student going to an internship site will be well-groomed, with iron-cloth, and iron-lab-coat. It is important to look professional.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

All written and oral information about a patient or client must be kept absolutely confidential. Interns are not to discuss any patient with anyone outside the hospital other than the health-care team. Interns must not discuss patients casually during breaks or at lunch. All reference to patient’s information should be removed when turning in completed work to the preceptor or the internship director due to the HIPAA Law.

**PRIOR LEARNING**

Texas A&M University-Kingsville Dietetic Internship Program does not assess prior learning experiences and does not credit prior learning experiences to shorten the length of an Internship or to eliminate rotation(s).

**ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION**

Written Assignments

Work should be thoroughly completed and have a professional appearance. Interns will be required to turn in work in three portfolios (3 hole-punch notebooks) with sleeves on outside of the front cover.

These portfolios need to be organized in the order provided by internship director in each of your assignment books, and the dividers for sections should be typed. A front cover stating your name and the rotation should be placed in the sleeve. The portfolio is a statement about you and is part of the
requirement for meeting CD4, “perform self-assessment, prepare a portfolio for professional development and participate in life long learning activities.” Dividers for each rotation should be professionally done.

Oral and written communication is one of the competencies that interns need to meet. All work should be typed, and most written work should be in third person and in complete sentences. This includes case studies and “synthesis” written during MNT rotations.

Assignments and evaluation procedures for the two didactic graduate credit courses (5352, 5353) are listed in the course syllabi provided at the beginning of classes. Interns will receive written feedback on assignments throughout and at the end of the courses. The two courses Practicum in Nutrition Care Management I & II, which are the practice experiences, can provide 12 hours of graduate credit. Interns will receive academic grades A-F for the completed work in these two courses.

Preceptors informally review interns work on a daily basis. Formal evaluations are given at the end of either a two or three week rotation and at the second and fourth week of a four-week rotation. The internship director may attend at least one evaluation for each intern during the internship, but may choose to attend more than one as needed or as schedule permits. Interns may make appointments with the internship director to discuss notebooks after completion of all work for each area. Grades will be assigned for work in the practicum according to the grading criteria given on page 16 of this handbook.

**FOOD SERVICE HANDLERS HEALTH PERMIT**

Interns are required to have a food/managers health permit from the particular county (Nueces/ Kleberg) in which food service rotations are preformed. Proof of certification will be required by facilities that provide experiences in Food Service Management. Nueces, Kleberg, and Jim Wells counties honor each others Food Handler permits. Certification should be done prior to the beginning of the internship. The cost associated with the Food Handler permit is $11.00 and for the online course it is $20.00.

- **Kleberg County**
  Kingsville-Kleberg City-County Health Unit. 8604 North Armstrong, 
  Kingsville, TX 78363. (361) 592-3324

- **Nueces County**
  Contact the Corpus ChristiNueces County Public Health District, 1702 
  Horne Road, Corpus Christi TX 78416. (361) 851-7273

- **Victoria County**
  No permit is needed for Victoria County.

**PERSONAL COMPUTER**

Interns are required to have their own computer, printer and access to the Internet. MS Word and PowerPoint software are required. A personal Palm Pilot to use in the clinical setting is strongly recommended. Some preceptors require students to have their own laptop computer with them. If you do not have personal lap-top, you either need to buy or borrow a laptop. The preceptor reserves the right to dismiss a student until personal lap-top is either purchased or taken to the site.

**DISCIPLINARY/TERMINATION PROCEDURES**

Interns must satisfy the responsibilities stated in this Handbook and the rotation workbooks. All work must be completed within the specified time periods. **Failure to meet a competency rating of 3.0 in two rotations will result in dismissal from the program.**

Preceptors should be discerning of interns who do not have the basic skills to do the assignments and
should inform the internship director that the intern needs support. Preceptors may need to review the “basics” with interns, but an intern should show the ability to grasp or remember these basics without the preceptor having to completely re-teach what should have been learned in an undergraduate program.

The internship director will need to work with each intern and provide the teaching. Interns who appear marginal may be given a set period of time as determined by the preceptor and director to show improvement. The preceptor should thoroughly read the Student Section of this handbook that provides policies and procedures for helping and if necessary, dismissing a marginal intern.

Interns must comply with all policies and procedures including those of the facilities and dietetic internship as stated in this handbook. Problems that arise will be discussed between the preceptor, student and the internship director. Should these policies and procedures continue to be violated, the student will receive a written warning. Interns who do not comply with the policy and procedures of the program and its affiliated practicum sites will be dismissed.

**PROCEDURES FOR RESIGNATION FROM INTERNSHIP**

Interns may resign from the internship at any time, and are required to meet with the internship director 24 hours after verbally resigning from the internship. A letter must be submitted to the Internship Director within 24 hours after this meeting. Within three days of resignation, interns must meet with the Chair of the Department of Human Sciences and complete a survey about the internship and provide reasons for leaving. Upon resignation, all rights to the internship are forfeited. All materials that belong to the Department of Human Sciences and to the Internship Director must be returned. Transcripts will not be released if you do not return materials, or do not follow all the above procedures.

**GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

The standards of the dietetic internship recognize your right to discuss and make appeals to solve grievances. You are encouraged to discuss any problem with your immediate preceptor. If the problem is not resolved after a formal discussion of the problem with the preceptor, the following grievance procedure should be followed.

1. Make an appointment to discuss the problem with the internship director.
2. If the problem remains unresolved ten days after speaking with the Internship Director, file a grievance in writing to the Chairperson of the Department of Human Sciences.
3. If the problem remains unresolved after Step 2, file a grievance in writing to the Dean of the Dick and Mary Lewis Kleberg College of Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Human Sciences.

University grievance procedures will then be followed as described in the *Texas A&M University Student Handbook Planner.*

**EVALUATION OF DIETETIC INTERNSHIP**

During the internship, interns have the opportunity to formally assess how well the internship is helping them achieve the performance requirements and meet internship goals, which include facilities, instructors, and preceptors of the internship. The evaluations of preceptors and instructors will be treated as confidential by the internship director and will not be provided to those individuals without permission from the intern.
PROFESSIONALISM

Although interns are graduate students, they should think of themselves as professionals and not as students. Think of the internship program as your first job. Developing a professional attitude will be important throughout the internship and your career. So beginning to promote a professional image through the internship is important.

PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS AND CHALLENGES

The internship may present some problems therefore, interns must be able to resolve problems and conflicts when they occur. There will not be perfect days. On top of a heavy load of work, you will face challenges and people who are not always operating at their best and conflicts may occur as a result.

Learning to resolve problems with people is crucial to being a great professional. It is how you choose to resolve the problems that will make you a “winner” in the situation. It is important to be flexible and know that you will face many situations which may rearrange your plans and schedule. That is part of the internship; learning to work in real situations.

During the internship you will be evaluated both formally and informally. Interns have the right to express their feelings about their criticisms. But it is important that you learn how to take constructive criticism. However, there may be conflicts which are not part of your informal or formal evaluation. If you cannot forgive and forget a matter when someone has shown inappropriate behavior or used ungracious words, then you must resolve it with the individual. This includes your preceptors. Here are four rules of communication you need to follow:

- Be honest with the person with whom you have the problem. If you are not honest, you will most likely vent it to everyone else because you are dealing with an unresolved problem. You must learn to be honest. The other person may be unaware that you have a problem.

- Be timely in your communication about the problem. Make certain that problems are resolved quickly. Problems that go unresolved and are swept under the rug cause bumps in the rug making it difficult to walk over. So don’t sweep the problems under the rug.” Resolve them quickly. Be careful to choose a good time discuss the problem.

- Learn to act and not react when people fail you or hurt your feelings. Remember, problems are caused by two people. Both are part of the problem. Look at the problem through the other person’s eyes. When discussing the problems put the problem in “I” terms. “I” have a problem. It may appear in your eyes to be their fault, but be willing to express it this way. Also, be willing to say “I goofed!” And then figure a plan not to “goof” the next time.

- Attack the problem, not the person. Use your energies to solve the problem rather than using it to vent to others. Remember, it is usually not the person that is the problem, but a kink in the system. Develop a learner’s spirit. Ask yourself: “What is the problem? Am I at fault or part of the problem?” Venting to others expends your energies and the information ends up as gossip. If the person with whom you are discussing the problem is not a part of the problem or part of the solution, do not discuss the problem with them. It is appropriate to discuss it with someone if the discussion is to focus on “Here is the problem.” and “How do I solve it.” The person with whom you select to discuss the issue should be capable of holding confidentiality and be capable of not picking up your offense toward the other individual. Remember, your internship director can help you resolve a problem.
PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF INTERNS

You are responsible to:

1. Follow policies and procedures of the facility and the internship at all times.

2. Promptly attend and actively participate in all classes and rotations at specified time. Be on-time for all rotations.

3. Be proactive. Read and thoroughly understand all assignments clarifying assignment responsibilities and due dates for projects. Interns are responsible to provide rough drafts of materials to avoid any misinterpretation between preceptor’s and intern’s understanding of a project.

4. Call the preceptor several days prior to the rotation to obtain starting time and location of facility or if you will be unavoidably late or are sick.

5. Build professional rapport with all staff and clients/patients related to their responsibilities.

6. Provide the preceptor with evaluation sheets on the first day of rotation.

7. Maintain AND Code of Ethics in all duties and communications.

8. Be a member of The America Dietetic Association. Corpus Christi interns should become members of the Corpus Christi District Dietetic Association and attend local meetings. Victoria interns should meet with Victoria dietitians.

ORIENTATIONS TO THE INTERNSHIP

Interns will be provided with all assignments that are to be completed over the nine months program one month in advance of rotation begins.

Interns will be provided with an orientation/ introduction to WIC and all interns will be provided with an orientation/ introduction to Driscoll Children’s Hospital in September or October.

Important Notes To All TAMUK Dietetic Internship Students

Retention and remediation procedure; DI program is affiliated with TAMUK core graduate program. Therefore, all students are treated equally and in a similar manor in line with the university policy and procedure. The dietetic students do have the same opportunity, rights, and privileges similar and as other students.
**AGREEMENT FORM FOR DIETETIC INTERNS**

I, _____________________________, have read this handbook and understand the policies and procedures outlined in it. In consideration of the benefits to be derived from participating in the Dietetic Internship sponsored by the Texas A&M University-Kingsville, I, _____________________________, (hereinafter referred to as "Participant"), do hereby release and forever discharge and hold harmless Texas A&M University-Kingsville (hereinafter collectively referred to as "University") and its affiliates and rotation sites (hereinafter collectively referred to as "Affiliates") their respective directors, officers, employees, agents and all persons associated with the University and its Affiliates from and against any and all actions, causes of actions, claims and demands of any character, type, or discipline brought or made, for or on account of any injuries or damage received or sustained by Participant and/or his/her property, arising out of the sponsoring Affiliates, their agents, employees or assigns as a result of participating in said Program.

**TAMUK Dietetic Internship Mandatory Requirement**

It is TAMUK’s DI program standard requirement for all interns to furnish original verification statement and final transcripts with the degree conferred prior to starting the internship. Any student who is unable to provide original verification statement and official transcript prior to start of the internship will be excused from the program until the two documents are provided.

I certify that I am over the age of eighteen (18) and am legally competent to execute this binding release. It is understood that this release shall be binding upon myself, my assigns, my personal representatives and heirs.

DATE: __________________ SIGNED __________________

Participant
PRINT NAME: ______________________________________

ADDRESS: __

_________________________ WITNESS: _________________________

PRINT NAME: ______________________________________
ADDRESS: ______________________________________
Interns must satisfy the responsibilities stated in this *Handbook* and the rotation workbooks. All work must be completed within the specified time periods. Failure to meet an average of 3.0 in two rotations may result in dismissal from the program. The following grades apply to competency level, products, work skills and professionalism.

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**Grading Notes:**

Interns require guidance on projects and *rough drafts* should be submitted to ensure that the assignment has been properly understood. Due dates should be honored and the work should be graded at that time.
INJURIES AT THE FACILITY

In a case of an accident, the facility will initiate contact with “911” and ask for assistance, First Aid, and student transport by the 911 emergency personal to an emergency room for further treatment and evaluations. Each student carries health insurance. The DI program Director will provide a copy of the insurance document to the facility before student placement. The DI program Director must be notified in a case of an emergency.

RENTENTION AND REMEDIATION

Dietetic Interns are admitted to the graduate program in Human Science; therefore, all students are treated equally and in a similar manner in line with the university policy and procedures. The dietetic interns do have the same opportunity, rights, and privileges similar to all other student’s campus wide. TAMUK graduate manual and university policy stated in student handbook will be used for remediation procedure.

It is a policy of the program to work closely with preceptors to accommodate, develop, and strengthen student’s practical dietetic knowledge base. When student fails two rotation segments in a given semester, they are dismissed from the program. In special cases when preceptor feels student need extra-work and extra-time, the time and the duration of the specific rotation will be extended up to 120 hours to enhance students knowledge and expertise. The student will be evaluated bi weekly and the progress evaluation will be documented to ensure positive outcome. Once the student has received a minimum 80% satisfactory of the evaluation, the student will proceed with continuation of the rotation. After the completion of 120 hours extended rotation, if the satisfactory rate is below 80% documented outcome, then the student will be dismissed from the DI program. Nevertheless, the student may choose to continue with the master graduate degree in Human Sciences when their GPA is maintained to a “B” average in accordance with the university policy.
RESPONSIBILITIES OF PRECEPTORS

With Interns

1) Read this Handbook of the Texas A&M University-Kingsville Dietetic Internship Program and the Assignments/Evaluations notebooks provided by internship director.

2) Communicate with intern about the site location (give clear directions) and the time to be at site on first day of rotation. Inform intern about the kinds of activities they will do the first day. Inform intern of changes in these plans when emergencies occur.

3) Orient the interns.
   A. Introduce them to staff with whom they will be working.
   B. Show them where to find pertinent information, charts and records within the facility.
   C. Provide interns with the facilities policies and procedures. Discuss important ones with them.
   D. Allow intern to observe you doing your job. Learning does not occur when the intern is told audibly about an assignment. Most people learn faster if they are given the opportunity to observe and then practice what they have observed.

4) Read and discuss the assignment sheets with the intern the first day.

5) Be professional when working with all interns, despite any similarities and/or differences in personalities, educational strengths or weaknesses, values, or standards.

6) Be prepared to precept the intern at the beginning of the rotation. Be ready to assign activities, projects, and audits that are well-designed prior to the beginning of the rotation. This planning will benefit both the facility and interns.

Dietitians should prepare exactly what the interns will do at the facility prior to their beginning a rotation. This might best be done during early summer after the internship is over and in time to provide written changes to the internship director. Activities, titles of in-services, projects, audits, and other activities should be designed and written prior to the beginning of the internship. This eliminates stress when the intern arrives and needs the assignments. WIN/WIN experiences for interns and facilities can be achieved by:

a. Providing projects and audits that benefit the facility.

b. Eliminating confusion when assignments or due dates are not clear or are not in writing.

c. Not adding additional or extra assignments to an already full schedule of activities that interns must complete. Assignments are contractual agreements and need to be provided in assignment notebooks at beginning of semester.
7) Give clear guidelines and deadlines for projects and assignments. Be specific about what you want done and the dates when you want rough drafts and the final copy. Put it in writing! Better yet, once you communicate with the intern about a project, have the intern write down the instructions and the due date so that both can read it.

8) Evaluate the intern on a formal and informal basis. Evaluations should be done informally on a daily basis. An intern should receive oral feedback daily and written feedback at least every two weeks.

*With Internship Director*

1) Help internship director evaluate the program. Provide feedback on various aspects of assignments and evaluation sheets.

2) Provide information to internship director about changes in assignments during summer prior to the internship so that all assignments can be written down in assignment sheets.

3) Communicate with internship director about any intern who is not following policies and procedures, including prompt attendance to rotation, dress code, or other policies.

4) Communicate with internship director about an intern who needs extra help and support.

5) Provide information about new preceptors and update a contract when necessary.

**DAILY WORK SCHEDULE**

Interns are to work at least 32 hours per week. At times, students may have to work beyond 32 hours to 40 hours per week to complete their assignments. Sometimes students may need to leave a facility to attend scheduled presentations. The daily work schedule can vary from one site to another. Dietetic Interns are scheduled to attend various sites to learn from the preceptor and the staff. Scheduling interns to various sites does not imply replacing an employee by interns. Rather, the intern position at a site is in addition to the existing employee schedule and not a substitute for employee’s schedule.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

HSCI 5650 Practicum in Nutrition Care Management I - Covers the 600 hours of rotation at the acute-care hospital, the two-week rotation at Driscoll Children’s Hospital ( Corpus Christi component) and the three-week rotation at the dialysis center.

HSCI 5650 Practicum in Nutrition Care Management II - Covers six weeks Community Nutrition Rotation and two eight-week rotation in Food Service Management.

Specific assignments for these rotations will be emailed to interns and preceptors.

*Syllabi Are Legal Documents*

The assignments that interns and preceptors receive are syllabi for the two graduate practicum courses.
These are legal documents describing requirements for interns. They are provided at the beginning of the 1,200 hours of supervised practice experience. It is important that all work assigned to interns be written in the assignment sheets. The objectives of the assignments in the notebooks are to:

Meet the Core Disciplines in Dietetics and Medical Nutrition Competencies as written in the Standards from the ACEND. All entry-level dietitians including those graduating from an undergraduate coordinated program must meet the core competencies. In addition, they are required to meet competencies for the MNT concentration competencies.

Assignment sheets can be changed to provide opportunities at various facilities. Preceptors are encouraged to change the assignments to provide specialized activities that can be obtained only at their site. But major changes should be done prior to the start of the internship with the approval of the program director. The total work of the internship is written to meet the goals above. Adding work after the assignments are written and after orientation means that assignments are surpassing the requirements of the syllabi (a legal document) given to students earlier in the semester or year. As young professionals, interns have the option to determine if they have the time and resources to do extra work (i.e., an in-service) requested by preceptor(s) that is not written in the syllabi without having their grade jeopardized. Planning by preceptors and the internship director during the summer is very important so that assignments can provide a WIN/WIN situation for interns, preceptors, and facilities.

**EVALUATION OF INTERNS**

Evaluation is an important part of supervising an intern. Receiving feedback is necessary for an intern to know how to improve and it provides encouragement. Evaluation provides the opportunity for interns to ask questions and for preceptors to informally or formally provide guidance.

The ACEND is strict about evaluating interns. They provide these guidelines:

1) Interns must know on a regular, daily basis how they are doing.
2) Evaluations must be done informally and formally. Informal evaluations should be done on a daily basis, even on occasion, several times a day.
3) Formal evaluations for the TAMUK internship are to be completed in writing using the evaluation sheets provided. Formal evaluations should be done:

- At least every two weeks for the four-week food-service evaluations, and once a week for an intern who needs extra help.
- At the conclusion of the interns rotation.
- By the preceptor who has spent the most time supervising the intern’s work. If other people do the evaluation, the preceptor or staff member should be present who has worked the most time with the intern.
- In person with the preceptor. This allows the preceptors to discuss areas to be strengthened and allows the intern to clarify various aspects of the evaluation. Evaluations should not be mailed to the intern.
POLICY ON SITE SELECTION AND AFFILIATION AGREEMENTS

The Program Director will select new rotation sites based on need or the ability of the site to provide a unique niche to the rotation offerings. The program director will meet with the lead preceptor and review relevant competencies and learning activities appropriate to the site’s emphasis area. Scheduling procedures, length of rotation and learning activities will be mutually agreeable to both the DI and primary preceptor. An affiliation agreement must be signed by both parities before interns may be placed in rotation at that site. Site evaluation will occur through intern evaluations and correspondence with the primary preceptor.

The affiliation agreements have been developed by the Texas A&M University systems attorney’s office. The program director is following the rules and guidelines set and mandated by the TAMU attorney’s office. The affiliation agreements are maintained in good standing and are being held at the Department of Human Sciences. The duration of each affiliation agreement is three years.

The formal agreement is signed when

a. the site is willing to joining the program
b. the affiliation agreement has been reviewed and signed
c. the DI policy and procedure manual has been reviewed
d. the assignments have been reviewed to determine whether the site as the adequate space, manpower, training to participate as a preceptor.
e. the program director has visited the facility to ensure adequacy, equipment, and that the preceptor training is in line with the goals and mission of the program.
f. The facility has reviewed the assignments and has agreed to participate in assignment development.
g. The facility has agreed to ensure the feasibility of assisting students with assignment completion.
Grading Criteria for Internship Rotations

Interns must satisfy the responsibilities stated in this *Handbook* and the rotation workbooks. All work must be completed within the specified time periods. Failure to meet an average of 3.0 in two rotations may result in dismissal from the program. The following grades apply to competency level, products, work skills and professionalism.

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Grading Notes:

Interns require guidance on projects and *rough drafts* should be submitted to ensure that the assignment has been properly understood. Due dates should be honored and the work should be graded at that time.
ACADEMIC GRADES

In all internship courses, including the didactic and graduate courses offered in the Fall and Spring prior to the rotations, an intern must achieve 90-100 to receive an “A” and an 80-89 to achieve a “B”. They need to achieve a grade of “B” or higher in order to satisfactorily complete the internship and receive their verification statement. Preceptors must be objective, maintain high standards, and fairness when evaluating interns. The scores the preceptor gives on the Evaluation Sheet are the grades used for calculating the academic grade.

SUPPORT OF INTERNS WITH MARGINAL SKILLS

Interns are graduate students who have the ability to work independently once they have been thoroughly oriented to the facility and have been given the opportunity to shadow dietitians to see how they do their jobs. Although they can work independently, this does not mean that they do not need guidance and support. All interns need to be questioned to determine their understanding of basic science or principles behind assignments.

Preceptors should be discerning of interns who do not have the basic skills to do the assignments and should inform the internship director that the intern needs support. Preceptors may need to review the “basics” with interns, but an intern should show the ability to grasp or remember these basics without the preceptor having to completely re-teach what should have been learned in an undergraduate program. The internship director will need to work with such an intern and provide the teaching. Interns who appear marginal must be given a set period of time as determined by preceptor and director to show improvement. The preceptor should thoroughly read the Student Section of this handbook that provides policies and procedures for helping and if necessary, dismissing a marginal intern.

EVALUATION OF PRECEPTORS

The preceptors are evaluated by each intern at the end of the rotation. The evaluations are provided to the internship director. The evaluations are treated as confidential by the internship director and will only be provided to those individuals with permission from the intern.

EVALUATION OF PROGRAM

The internship is evaluated yearly by interns, employers, preceptors, outside advisors, graduates of the internship and their employers. Evaluations are sent to all preceptors at the end of the internship. Interns also receive an extensive evaluation about sites and all classes. Feedback by preceptors is important.

Advisory Committee of the Internship

The internship has an advisory committee comprised of preceptors from all the three areas of the dietetic internship. Any preceptor or graduate intern can be a part of this advisory committee. They need to contact the internship director if they wish to serve on this committee.
PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF INTERNS

The responsibilities of interns are stated in Section II of this handbook.

TIPS ON LEADERSHIP AND MENTORING INTERNS

1) Promote an environment of mutual respect. They need to be respected as young professionals who need to “learn the ropes.”

2) Promote an open environment that gives non-verbal and verbal permission to interns to ask questions and learn. The preceptor may wish to ask probing questions that guide the intern through the thought process so the intern can eventually answer their own questions.

3) Guide the intern through an activity, process or project demonstrating the willingness to talk through or guide through the process.

4) Encourage the intern. Encouragement is an essential nutrient for the soul. All humans need daily doses of encouragement. One cannot live without it. It is good for preceptors to remember to give at least a few words every day so the intern who is learning new skills leaves with the courage that they are learning and will make it. It is also important that interns offer the same encouragement to their preceptors.

ADDITIONAL PROJECTS

Special projects assigned by hospitals whose details are not specified on assignment sheets need to be clearly communicated to interns. Both parties must understand the requirements of any project assigned. It is important that the preceptor have clearly in mind what is desired in the work or project and provide written instructions. Otherwise, the intern may interpret the instructions one way while the preceptor is thinking another. The intern should be given examples of other work, if possible, as guidelines for their projects.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FACILITIES FROM DIETETIC INTERNS

The facilities should benefit from having interns. The following are suggestions of how preceptors and facilities might make better use of interns as they rotate through the facility.

1) If the project takes more time than one intern can do, then the projects should be planned so that parts of the project can be completed by two interns. A team of interns could work on a project over two semesters.

2) Low-literacy leaflets can be developed for facilities.
Medical Nutrition Therapy I & II

Interns should be thoroughly oriented to all aspects of medical nutrition therapy, including all policies and procedures.

Rotations should build from basic to complex skills. Basic skills such as calorie counts and screening should be done in the beginning. Interns should be given more complex assignments on a daily basis once they demonstrate the ability to do basic ones. Tube feedings and TPN’s may be done during the last of MNT I if the student is prepared, otherwise, these probably should not be started until MNT II. How the intern is progressed from basic to complex skills is at the discretion of the preceptor, but preceptor should be careful to assure that interns master basic information and know the basics of common diseases before they are given more complicated assignments.

Dietetic Internship Workbook for Medical Nutrition Therapy

Interns are expected to know basic information about a variety of diseases. Worksheets on a variety of diseases have been designed as a review prior to the three MNT rotations and the dialysis center. These are provided in a book separate from the MNT assignment book. Each core site and dialysis center should have a copy.

Interns will not be expected to write every term. They should be able to orally describe some of the terms while others should be written. Instructions are specified for each assignment sheet. The preceptor is encouraged to quiz the intern on these terms pertinent to the rotation. Interns are to review terms, know them and write down those that are unfamiliar or specified on work sheets. Preceptors should request that all work is to be written to assure that interns are preparing prior to the rotations.

Counseling Patients

Interns should have as many opportunities as possible to counsel patients during MNT I and II. They should also continue to counsel patients, if possible, during the Intensive Care rotation if they need more practice and particularly when they have not had many opportunities to more complicated counseling during previous rotations. The intern should have the opportunity to observe a dietitian do both basic and complex diet instructions.

Case Studies

Interns are expected to do one case study in each of the three rotations at the core site. The case studies should be selected by the preceptor and intern so the intern selects interesting, yet complicated case studies that progress from basic to more complicated cases. The case study selected in MNT II is to be presented to dietitians during Staff Experience. It is selected during this rotation to give the intern time to find new research about the case. The patient selected should be of interest to both preceptor and intern. The case study presented to the dietitians is written in the same format as other case studies, but the emphasis of the presentation to dietitians should be on the physiology of disease/s and synthesis of new research, thus combining parts of new research to form a whole by deductive reasoning. Interns are expected to formally present the case study by preparing visual aids to show patho-physiology.
and to present details pertaining to the case. If facilities require a less formal approach, the preceptors need to communicate this with the intern. However, the one given at the core site is intended to prepare interns to present to colleagues.

*Articles for Preceptors*

In the past, interns have been asked to find research articles for MNT preceptors as a kind of “payback” to preceptors. It is encouraged that research articles at the core site be on several topics to help the preceptor with more updated information about the topics.

*Staff Experience*

Interns are required to write goals for their staff experience. Part of the goals will be to complete the work of dietitians. Interns should specify units that they wish to cover. It is appropriate that the intern work on an intensive care unit as long as the other units selected do not have “numerous complicated patients” that take time to assess. The interns are responsible for providing goals to the preceptor and internship director one week before the Intensive Care rotation. This allows time for all parties to examine the workload to see if it really fulfills 70% of the dietitian’s load. Goals of staff experience should include more than just “doing the work of the dietitian”.

*Working Weekends and On Call During Weekends*

Interns can work on weekends but should be given notice well in advance that they are working a particular weekend. Also, they need to be given a day off during the week since they have other assignments and projects that usually take the week-ends to complete.

Interns can be “on call” during staff experience only, but they should be assigned only to the hospital at which they received orientation to the hospital and where they have observed preceptors. This protects both interns and preceptors as to liabilities where the intern may not know policies and procedures or arrives at unit of a hospital, and the staff is not familiar with the intern.

*Chart Audits*

Interns are required to do chart audits at the core site where they do 9-week MNT rotation. This chart audit, like projects, needs to be discussed during the first two weeks after the intern arrives at the facility. This gives interns the time needed to complete projects before staff experience.

The chart audit should be of value to the facility. The written report of the audit should be thorough and written in the style requested by the preceptor. A suggested style is in the *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics* having an 1) Introduction; 2) Methods; 3) Results; 4) Conclusions 5) Suggestions for Future Audits. Raw data should be given to the preceptor, but the results should be analyzed and compiled and presented in the above format. Raw data belongs to the facility and should be returned with the completed report. It also needs to be provided to the preceptor in case the intern misinterpreted the data.
Projects at Core Site

Only one project should be completed by the intern. These are guidelines for the projects during MNT.

1. Projects are tasks that the core hospitals needs, but because of time constraints, they often do not get accomplished. Suggestions for projects are 1) updating educational materials to meet current standards that are culturally and literacy appropriate; 2) continuous quality improvement monitors that support reimbursements.

2. Projects should be assigned during the first week of medical nutrition therapy i.e. orientation. Interns are responsible for initiating discussion of the project so that they can complete them in appropriate time. These projects are for the benefit of the facility.

3. Projects must be designed so that interns are able to complete them in required time during the semester they are in clinical rotations. Date of completion is set by preceptor and intern during first week of medical nutrition therapy.

4. Projects are to be done outside hospital hours unless there is an extra hour after other patient-care activities are completed for the day.

5. Projects, like lessons, must be professionally done.

6. Criteria for purpose of material, who will be the audience, the educational level of material, # of pages, font size, and type of picture needs to be specified by the hospital. Exact materials to be used and the exact process to accomplish the task should be clearly specified in writing to avoid any misunderstanding. This includes the date the project should be done and completed. Any expenses need to be negotiated by facility.

7. Several due dates for projects need to be set for rough drafts to be turned in and the final draft should be completed during the first week of Staff Experience.

8. Intern must provide a completed project at the specified final due date and according to specifications established by dietitians. There are no exceptions to completion dates. Therefore, specified completion dates must be reasonable to allow the interns to complete this assignment.

9. Intern is responsible for providing the preceptor with the evaluation sheet for projects when turning in the project to the preceptor.

10. Preceptors are responsible for using the Project Evaluation Sheet to grade projects.
SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMMUNITY NUTRITION

Topics for Lessons and In-services

Topics for lessons at facilities should be provided to the internship director before the end of June. This provides the internship director the opportunity to type titles on the assignment sheet. When possible, it would be profitable that the topics assigned to one intern be the same or similar from site to site so they can adapt the material for various sites. This may not be possible for rotations over the life-span, but it would stream-line work for the interns.

Spanish Assignments

Translation of all materials into Spanish is difficult for the non-Spanish speaking intern. During the community rotations, translation into Spanish may be done on team projects or limited to two individual projects by one intern.

Establishing Time of Formal Evaluations

Formal evaluations should be done on the last day of the rotation. Interns should give assignments to the preceptor in time for them to grade them prior to evaluation. Therefore due dates should be clearly specified. The interns must be evaluated before they leave a rotation and enter a new one. Obviously, this may not be possible as there are exceptions, but the exceptions should be rare. Evaluations of interns should be managed and planned so that precepting interns does not take extra time. It may mean that interns stay later or come earlier on the last day of the rotation. In those rare exceptions when preceptors are not available at the end of the rotations, they should specify ahead of time exactly where and when the evaluation will be done. The evaluation may be done by another preceptor at the site. Setting clear evaluations times in these rare exceptions will eliminate extra phone calls and will manage this process. It takes time for interns to drive to and from an evaluation outside the regularly scheduled rotation.

Equipment and Copies for Community Lessons

Interns are responsible for providing any materials that need to be copied to the preceptor so that the copies can be made in plenty of time before the lesson. Interns should request ahead of time any equipment that they will need to present the lesson i.e. overhead projectors.

Holidays During Community Rotation

There may be some holidays that occur when interns are scheduled in community rotations. The master schedule has been adjusted for interns to get as much community experience as possible, but it may not be possible for interns to complete every community rotation if there are holidays occurring during the week at that particular site. Interns will still get the experience needed to achieve competencies necessary to be entry-level, but they may not get all the experiences received by another intern.
SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR FOOD SERVICE MANAGEMENT

Purpose of Two Food Service Rotations

The purpose of having two food service management rotations is to give the intern experience in two different types of food service systems. Therefore, the goal of food service is for interns to compare all subsystems of these two major food service systems. Interns will be required to write a comparative analysis of these two systems during their second food service rotations. The analysis should be shared with the preceptor and the internship director, and with the preceptor from first rotation if the preceptor requests it.

Supervisory/Administrative Experiences

Interns are to spend time in kitchens “supervising” during both food service experiences. Interns should do supervisory experiences either the last three weeks of a four-week rotation or the last two weeks of a three-week rotation.

Human Resource Management Functions

Role plays to interview and evaluate employees must be completed at one of the two food service sites. If role plays cannot be done by the preceptor, interns can complete this assignment with other staff.

Nutrient Analysis of Menus

During the four-week food service rotation, interns are to conduct a nutrient analysis of their menus. If the facility does not have this analysis, they are to go to Texas A&M University-Kingsville where computer software for nutrient analysis of food items is available. Nutrient analysis must be done, particularly for nutrients specified on assignment sheets.

Two-week Evaluation Food Service

A formal evaluation should be completed at the end of the two weeks of food service of a four-week or four-week food service rotation. It is imperative that interns receive feedback oral feedback daily and a formal evaluation at the end of a two-week period and the final evaluation. These evaluations can be documented on the same forms that will be used at the end of the rotation.
NAME OF PRECEPTOR

DATE

Check (✔️) your response to each statement by using the following scale: E - excellent; G - good; F - fair; P - poor

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<tr>
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<th>E</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preceptor:</td>
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<td>1. Demonstrated interest in the intern.</td>
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<td>2. Promoted an environment of mutual respect.</td>
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<td>3. Promoted environment that encouraged questions from intern.</td>
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<td>4. Showed ability to guide instruct intern in the rotation.</td>
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<td>5. Was sensitive to the learning needs of the student.</td>
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<td>7. Communicated effectively with intern; listened and answered questions.</td>
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<td>8. Was fair in evaluation of intern.</td>
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<td>9. Was professional.</td>
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<td>10. Acted as role model and mentor.</td>
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<td>11. Encouraged the heart.</td>
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Comments:
DIETETIC INTERNSHIP ACADEMIC CALENDAR FOR 2013-2014

The Dietetic Internship does not follow the academic calendar for the university. You may be required to attend classes on days prior to the start of classes for the university and on other days that may be holidays for other students. When making plans for travel/days off, it is advised that you contact the director.

SUMMER II

July 9th

HSCI 5352 & HSCI 5353

FALL

August 9th 2013
Intern Orientation

August 12th 2013
Start of fall rotations

August 12th 2013
Start of HSCI 5650 Practicum in Nutritional Care Management

November 28-29th, 2013
THANKSGIVING BREAK

December 18, 2013
End of HSCI 5650 Practicum in Nutritional Care Management

December 20, 2013
End of fall rotations. All Assignments due.

SPRING

December 21th 2013– January 6nd 2014
WINTER BREAK

January 7, 2014
Start of spring rotations

January 7, 2014
Start of HSCI 5650 Practicum in Nutritional Care Management I and II

May 15th 2014
End of HSCI 5650 Practicum in Nutritional Care Management I and II.

May 15, 2014
End of spring rotations. All Assignments due. TAMUK DI evaluations

May 16, 2014
Penning Ceremony

May 16, 2014
Issue Verification Statement to interns who successfully complete the program. Students will receive Verification Statements either in person or will be mailed to the permanent address on file.
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-KINGSVILLE CALENDER YEAR
Fall Semester 2013

Apr. 1  8 a.m.  Priority Registration begins for 2013 Fall Semester.
Aug. 1  5 p.m.  Graduate and Undergraduate Students - Deadline to file Application for Degree Candidacy in December with Academic College Dean.
Aug. 5  Tuition emergency loans begin.
Aug. 10 Late Registration begins.  A $35 Late Registration Fee will be assessed to students registering late.
Aug. 19  4 p.m.  Payment Deadline.  A $35 Late Payment Fee will be assessed for registering and/or paying after this date.
Aug. 19  Book emergency loans begin.
Aug. 22  General Faculty/Staff Meeting, Jones Auditorium.
Aug. 22-23 Meetings of deans with departmental chairs and departmental meetings.
Aug. 24  9 a.m.  Residence Halls open.
Aug. 26  First Class Day of all regular students.
Aug. 30  Fifth Class Day.  Students will be dropped from classes if they have not paid in full or made payment arrangements.
Aug. 31  First Class Day of all Saturday students.
Sept. 2  Labor Day Holiday.
Sept. 3-11  Permission to register or change classes is required from the adviser and professor.
Sept. 3  A $100 Reinstatement Fee will be assessed to students requesting reinstatement.
Sept. 11  NO REGISTRATION AFTER THIS DATE.  Twelfth Class Day.  Census Date.  Student will be dropped from classes added after the Fifth Class Day if they have not paid in full or made payment arrangements with the Business Office.  No reinstatement of classes.
Sept. 20  Deadline for students applying for graduation to complete the Change of Name Request form with the Office of the Registrar.
Sept. 27  Last day for students completing graduation requirements in December to submit their Application for Candidacy form approved by their Academic Dean with the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.
Sept. 30  Five-week Point.
Oct. 1  Period for students planning May or August graduation to apply for Application for Candidacy forms with deans of their colleges.
Oct. 7  Five-week grades due via Blue and Gold Connection.
Oct. 17  4 p.m.  Book and tuition emergency loan payment deadline.
Oct. 21  8 a.m.  Registration begins for all students for 2013 Winter Intersession.
Oct. 21  8 a.m.  Priority Registration begins for 2014 Spring Semester.
Oct. 30  Title IV 60% of semester.
Oct. 31  5 p.m.  Last day to drop a course with an automatic Q.  Last day for faculty to drop for non-attendance.
Nov. 28-29  Thanksgiving Holidays.
Dec. 2  Graduate and Undergraduate Students - Deadline to file Application for Degree Candidacy in May with Academic College Dean.
Dec. 2-5  Dead Week.
Dec. 4  Last Class Day.
Dec. 4  Last day to drop a course or withdraw from the university.
Dec. 5  Study Day (no classes).
Dec. 6-12  Final examinations.
Dec. 13  Commencement.
Dec. 14  12 p.m.  Residence Halls close.
Dec. 16  9 a.m.  Grades due via the web at Blue and Gold Connection.
### Spring Semester 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 21</td>
<td>8 a.m.</td>
<td>Priority Registration begins for 2014 Spring Semester.</td>
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<td>Dec. 2</td>
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<td>Graduate and Undergraduate Students - Deadline to file Application for Degree Candidacy in May with Academic College Dean.</td>
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<td>Dec. 9</td>
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<td>Tuition emergency loans begin.</td>
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<td>Dec. 14</td>
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<td>Late Registration begins. A $35 Late Registration Fee will be assessed to students registering late.</td>
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<td>Jan. 6</td>
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<td>Book emergency loans begin.</td>
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<td>Jan. 6</td>
<td>4 p.m.</td>
<td>Payment Deadline. A $35 Late Payment Fee will be assessed for registering and/or paying after this date.</td>
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<td>Jan. 10</td>
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<td>General Faculty Meeting, Peacock Auditorium (BESB 100).</td>
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<td>Jan. 10</td>
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<td>Meetings of deans with departmental chairs and departmental meetings.</td>
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<td>Jan. 11</td>
<td>9 a.m.</td>
<td>Residence Halls open.</td>
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<td>Jan. 13</td>
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<td>First Class Day of all regular students.</td>
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<td>Jan. 17</td>
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<td>Fifth Class Day. Students will be dropped from classes if they have not paid in full or made payment arrangements by this date.</td>
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<td>Jan. 18</td>
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<td>First Class Day of all Saturday students.</td>
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<td>Jan. 20</td>
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<td>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Holiday.</td>
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<td>Jan. 21</td>
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<td>A $100 Reinstatement Fee will be assessed to students requesting reinstatement.</td>
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<td>Jan. 21-29</td>
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<td>Permission to register or changes classes is required from the adviser and professor.</td>
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<td>Jan. 29</td>
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<td>NO REGISTRATION AFTER THIS DATE. Twelfth class day. Census Date. Students will be dropped from classes added after the Fifth Class Day if they have not paid in full or made payment arrangements with the Business Office. No reinstatement of classes. No additional Emergency Loans beyond this date.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 31</td>
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<td>Deadline for students applying for graduation to complete the Change of Name Request form with the Office of the Registrar.</td>
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<td>Feb. 7</td>
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<td>Last day for students completing graduation requirements in May to submit their Application for Candidacy form approved by their Academic Dean with the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.</td>
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<td>Feb. 17</td>
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<td>Five-week Point.</td>
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<td>Feb. 24</td>
<td>9 a.m.</td>
<td>Five-week grades due via the web at Blue and Gold Connection.</td>
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<td>Feb. 28</td>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
<td>Book and tuition emergency loan payment deadline.</td>
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<td>Mar. 7</td>
<td>6 p.m.</td>
<td>Residence Halls close for Spring Break.</td>
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<td>Mar. 10-16</td>
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<td>Spring Break.</td>
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<td>Mar. 16</td>
<td>2 p.m.</td>
<td>Residence Halls re-open after Spring Break.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 17</td>
<td>8 a.m.</td>
<td>Classes resume.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 26</td>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
<td>Title IV 60% of semester.</td>
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<td>Mar. 27</td>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
<td>Last day to drop a course with an automatic Q. Last day for faculty to drop for non-attendance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr. 1</td>
<td>8 a.m.</td>
<td>Registration begins for all students for 2014 Spring Intersession.</td>
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<td>Apr. 1</td>
<td>8 a.m.</td>
<td>Priority Registration begins for 2014 Summer Sessions and 2014 Fall Semester.</td>
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<td>Apr. 18</td>
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<td>Good Friday. No Classes.</td>
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<td>Apr. 28-May 1</td>
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<td>Dead Week.</td>
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<td>Apr. 30</td>
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<td>Last Class Day.</td>
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<td>Apr. 30</td>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
<td>Last day to drop a course or withdraw from the university.</td>
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<td>May 1</td>
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<td>Graduate and Undergraduate Students – Deadline to file Application for Degree Candidacy in August with Academic College Dean.</td>
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<td>May 1</td>
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<td>Study Day (no classes).</td>
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<td>May 2-8</td>
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<td>Final examinations.</td>
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May 12 9 a.m. Grades due via the web at Blue and Gold Connection.