History of the Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) of Texas A&M University-Kingsville

The DPD is housed within the Department of Human Sciences, part of the Dick and Mary Lewis Kleberg College of Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Human Sciences at Texas A&M University-Kingsville. Its focus is on human nutrition and the application of the science of nutrition to health maintenance and health improvement.

The Human Sciences Department has been a part of the Texas A&M University-Kingsville since it was established in 1925. The initial emphasis was vocational home economics. A concentration in General Dietetics was added in 1956. The Didactic Program in Dietetics received accreditation status in 1992 and was followed by a Dietetic Internship program in 1994 receiving full accreditation in 1999. In 1991 a Master’s of Science in Human Sciences began with opportunity for concentration in Human Nutrition. Undergraduate Human Nutrition majors earn their baccalaureate degrees through the University’s Dick and Mary Lewis Kleberg College of Agriculture, Natural Science, and Human Sciences; the graduate students earn their Master of Science in Human Science degree through the School of Graduate Studies at Texas A&M University-Kingsville.

The Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) is located in the Department of Human Sciences and may be completed in conjunction with the Department's Bachelor of Science in Human Sciences with the Human Nutrition major or the Master of Science in Human Sciences. Students who have been accepted into the M.S. Degree Program or have a Baccalaureate Degree in a field other than nutrition may complete the DPD requirements along with their graduate coursework in Human Sciences, if they anticipate applying to a supervised practice program (dietetic internship).

Mission Statement of the Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD)

The mission of the DPD program at Texas A&M University Kingsville is to provide students with Foundation Knowledge and Skills for the didactic component of entry-level dietetic programs, to provide quality dietetic courses and didactic course learning experiences for students to complete the DPD, which prepares and enables students to enter into, and successfully complete an accredited dietetic internship and/or obtain employment in health-care
or industry. Graduates with a concentration in Human Nutrition meet the educational requirements for acceptance into a Commission on Accreditation of Dietetics Education (CADE) accredited dietetic internship or coordinated program. After successful completion of this Didactic Program in Dietetics, both completion of an internship or pre-professional program and a passing score on the dietetic registration examination is required to become a registered dietitian (RD). Program graduates should be able to work effectively as professionals within their communities to improve the quality of food and nutrition for all people.

To accomplish this mission, the program's curriculum includes broad foundations of knowledge in the fields of biochemistry, microbiology, human anatomy and physiology, management, education, communication, and psychology. In-depth course work is required in the fundamentals of nutrition, life cycle nutrition, medical nutrition therapy, cultural and community nutrition, food science and food service management.

Accreditation Status

The Didactic Program in Dietetics at Texas A & M University-Kingsville is currently Accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education (CADE) of the American Dietetic Association, 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000, Chicago, IL 60606-6995, 312/ 899-0400, ext. 5400.

DPD Program Goals

GOAL 1: Prepare graduates to achieve competence required for the entry-level dietetics professional.

GOAL 2: Produce graduates successful in obtaining internship acceptance and/or employment in nutrition, dietetics, food service administration or continue their education in graduate programs.

GOAL 3: Attract and retain students of diverse backgrounds in order to contribute to the delivery of nutrition services to the residents of Texas, as well as other areas of the United States or the world.

For more information about the DPD Program, contact DPD Program Director, Sara Carrion, MS, RD, CSP, LD, CLC at sara.carrion@tamuk.edu or 361-593-2205.