

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY DIDACTIC PROGRAM

Undergraduate Food, Nutrition and Dietetics Option — Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD)

Mission and Goals of the Food, Nutrition and Dietetics Option

The Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) at Illinois State University is one of the four undergraduate sequence options in the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences.

The Didactic Program meets the Standards of Education of The American Dietetic Association and prepares students for dietetic internships (preprofessional practice programs).

Mission of the Didactic Program

The Food, Nutrition and Dietetics sequence prepares students for careers in promoting optimal health by incorporating positive food and nutrition strategies which influence the overall well-being of individuals and communities

The Goals of the Didactic Program are to:

1. educate and advise students for acceptance into a supervised practice program or other opportunities in nutrition, food service management, community nutrition or related area.
2. increase understanding of the important role food and nutrition plays in the health and well-being of individuals throughout the lifecycle.
3. provide opportunities for student inquiry in the areas of logical thinking and independent learning so they can critically evaluate research as it applies to current practice.
4. introduce students to professional standards and ethical issues so their knowledge and skills can be used to fulfill personal, social and professional interests and responsibilities.
5. provide opportunities for students to develop an appreciation for the impact of government policies, agriculture and food in our society.

Accreditation Status

The Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) at Illinois State University is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education of The American Dietetics Association, a specialized accrediting body recognized by the Commission on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation and the United States Department of Education.

University Policies and Information

Consult the Undergraduate Catalog for policies and information about academic services, admission policies, costs, financial assistance, academic policies and practices, general education, degree requirements, academic program and course information, university-wide program and other useful information.

Being a Registered Dietitian (R.D.)

The Didactic Program provides the first steps for students wanting to become a registered dietitian (R.D.) by preparing graduates for a Dietetic Internship (preprofessional practice experience). The program culminates with students receiving a B.S. degree in Food, Nutrition and Dietetics and **ADA Verification Statement**, which verifies that graduates have met the national Standards of Education of The American Dietetic Association. An **American Dietetic Association Verification Statement of DPD Program Completion** will be given to students completing this sequence. This official statement is required for graduates to begin an ADA-accredited dietetic internship after acceptance, and for other professional applications requiring verification of DPD Program completion.

The first steps to become a registered dietitian are completed with the B.S. degree in Food, Nutrition and Dietetics, which meets the ADA Standards of Education course requirements. The remaining steps are to apply and be accepted by an ADA-accredited dietetic internship, successful completion of the dietetic internship, and then receiving a passing score on the national registration examination.

Summary of the steps required to become an R.D.:

ACTION:

1. Complete B.S. degree in FND or closely related major
2. Complete all ADA course requirements

Eligible to begin a dietetic internship

3. Complete 6-12 or longer month dietetic internship

Eligible to take R.D. exam

4. Pass R.D. exam

OUTCOME:

[B.S. degree (FND option) and]
[**DPD Verification Statement**]

[**DI Verification Statement**]

[Registered Dietitian (R.D.)]

Steps 1 and 2 are successfully achieved by completing the Didactic Program (Food, Nutrition and Dietetics Option) at Illinois State University. Students apply for a Dietetic Internship (preprofessional practice experience) during their senior year. Fall graduates can apply in late September for an internship beginning as early as January, while spring and summer graduates can apply in February for an internship beginning in the summer or early fall. The B.S. degree and official **ADA Verification Statement** are required to begin the dietetic internship. A **Declaration of Intent to Complete Degree** and **ADA-Approved Minimum Academic Requirements** is issued to students applying to a dietetic internship prior to actual graduation from the DPD Program to include in their application packet. Acceptance by a dietetic internship is a competitive process and graduates are not guaranteed acceptance by a dietetic internship.

The Didactic Program Director is responsible for advising students of the ADA application process and providing the official ADA forms (**Declaration of Intent to Complete Degree** and **ADA-Approved Minimum Academic Requirements** and **ADA Verification Statement**) required to apply and begin an ADA accredited dietetic internship. A portion of the FCS 300 – Leadership Develop for Family and Consumer Sciences Professionals course is devoted to the application process for ADA accredited dietetic internships. The process of gaining admission to a dietetic internship is extensively covered in this course. Materials to assist with applying for a dietetic internship are also available from the DPD Director.

The DPD Program provides training in Food, Nutrition and Dietetics for all graduates. Some students may choose to delay application to a dietetic internship and seek immediate employment in the field of food, nutrition and dietetics following dietetics. The DPD Program Director will provide the appropriate forms and assistance with the dietetic internship application process when requested by past graduates.

Career Opportunities in Food, Nutrition and Dietetics

Career opportunities in the broad field of food, nutrition and dietetics are quite varied and employment opportunities exist throughout the areas of healthcare, food service, education, and research.

Employment opportunities include: clinical or food service dietitian in a healthcare organization, food service manager for a company, nutrition consultant for a physician practice, community nutritionist, nutrition and health writer, food and nutrition product sales and marketing, corporate wellness, food promotion for grocery store, school foodservice and others.

A career information sheet summarizing career opportunities in the food, nutrition and dietetics field and the DPD program is available from the departmental academic advisor and DPD Director.

DPD Program

The DPD program is a 120–121 semester hour program that includes extensive coursework in the sciences, social sciences, management and specialized courses covering the broad field of food, nutrition and dietetics. A table outlining an eight-semester plan to complete the degree requirements and a student course check-off sheet is available from the departmental academic advisor and DPD Director.

Role of the DPD Director:

The DPD Director is responsible for seeing that the DPD Program (Food, Nutrition and Dietetics option) meets the Standards of Education established by The American Dietetic Association, advising students about career options, procedures related to applying to dietetic internships, becoming a dietitian, and issuing the official **ADA Verification Statement of DPD Program Completion**. The DPD Director reports to the Chair of the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences.

DPD Verification Statements

Graduates of the Food, Nutrition and Dietetics option at Illinois State University are eligible to receive an official **ADA Verification Statement**. Other students at Illinois State University must have their plan of study approved by the DPD Director and provide evidence of completing their plan prior to a **Verification Statement** being issued. An original copy is required to begin a dietetic internship (preprofessional practice experience) and for membership in The American Dietetic Association.

Graduates may obtain seven or more copies of the **ADA Verification Statement** following graduation by requesting them from the DPD Director. The request must include:

1. Request for VERIFICATION STATEMENT Form, available from DPD Director
2. Copy of official transcript from Illinois State University showing course and degree completion
3. Photocopies of transcripts from other institution(s) where required DPD course(s) completed.

The transcript(s) and final Illinois State University records will be evaluated to verify completion of the degree and all required courses, or acceptable substitutions.

Copies of *ADA Verification Statement* will be available to individuals completing the DPD Program by contacting the DPD Director through the departmental office (309) 438-2517 or sending a request to:

DPD Director
Department of Family and Consumer Sciences
Illinois State University
CAMPUS BOX 5050
Normal, IL 61790-5060