

PRE-DIETETICS

Interested in the wonderful world of nutrition and dietetics? Then you have come to the right place!

It may seem rather simplistic at first glance - eat a little more of this, a little less of that - but a career in nutrition and dietetics is far more complex and multifaceted than first meets the eye (& stomach!). Nutrition is a science that investigates the body's metabolic and physiological responses to food and explores the role of food and nutrients in the development, treatment, and prevention of disease. It also grapples with understanding and leveraging the web of factors that shape how, when, and what we eat.

In other words, nutrition professionals go far beyond pushing fruits and vegetables (although that is certainly important, so be sure to eat them if you can!). Their understanding of the interrelationships between diet, health, and disease allows them to counsel others about culturally relevant approaches to food selection, food preparation, and beneficial eating habits. They are also equipped to work with organizations and communities to make our environments more food secure and conducive to health and well-being. Ultimately, a career in nutrition will allow you to serve as a credible expert who is able to use scientific evidence about food, nutrition, and eating behavior to make a meaningful difference in the lives of others.

The professional titles/credentials in the field of nutrition and dietetics include RD/RDN (Registered Dietitian or Registered Dietitian Nutritionist) - which requires at least a bachelor's degree* - and NDTR (Nutrition & Dietetic Technician, Registered) which requires an associate degree or higher. You can earn these credentials by successfully completing an ACEND-accredited program(s) (<https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/accredited-programs/about-accredited-programs/>) which includes coursework and supervised practice and then passing a national credentialing exam.

**Effective January 1, 2024, a minimum of a master's degree will be required to be eligible to take the credentialing exam to become a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN).*

An undergraduate degree in Nutritional Sciences (<https://uwm.edu/healthsciences/academics/bachelors-nutritional-sciences/>) is ideal preparation for ACEND-accredited graduate-level dietetics programs. Most of the prerequisite courses required for admission to such programs are built directly into the degree. More information about this can be found in the **Requirements** tab.

Future Education Model Program in Nutrition and Dietetics

UWM has applied to the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) to open a new and innovative program to prepare Registered Dietitian Nutritionists in Fall 2023.

Our eligibility application was accepted by ACEND* and we are in the candidacy process for our proposed Future Education Model Graduate program: **Master of Public Health – Nutrition and Dietetics track**. The program is not accepting applications at this time but will do so upon successful completion of the eligibility application process if the program receives candidacy for accreditation status from ACEND.

Contact Lori Klos, PhD, RD, lklos@uwm.edu, 414-251-8220 for more information.

*The Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) released the Future Education Model Accreditation Standards for programs in nutrition and dietetics (see www.eatrightpro.org/FutureModel/). These accreditation standards integrate didactic coursework with supervised experiential learning in a competency-based curriculum designed to prepare nutrition and dietetics practitioners for future practice.

If you are interested in pursuing an ACEND-accredited program in dietetics, particularly at the graduate-level (*effective 1/1/24, a master's degree will be required to take the RDN exam*), you will need to complete certain prerequisite coursework at the undergraduate level and obtain your bachelor's degree.

UWM's BS Nutritional Sciences degree (<https://uwm.edu/healthsciences/academics/bachelors-nutritional-sciences/>) can prepare you to apply for our proposed Future Education Model Graduate program: Master of Public Health – Nutrition and Dietetics track. However, many graduate-level dietetics programs will consider students with a bachelor's degree in another field of study if certain prerequisite coursework for admission is completed. Commonly required prerequisite coursework includes:

- Introduction to nutrition (NUTR 235 OR BMS 232)
- Introduction to food/food science (NUTR 110)
- Lifecycle nutrition (NUTR 245)
- General biology (BIO SCI 150)
- Microbiology (BIO SCI 101)
- Anatomy & physiology (2 semesters; BIO SCI 202 & BIO SCI 203)
- Chemistry sequence culminating in biochemistry
 - CHEM 101 & CHEM 103 OR
 - CHEM 102, CHEM 104, CHEM 341, & CHEM 501
- Introduction to psychology or sociology (PSYCH 101 OR SOCIOL 101)
- Public speaking (COMMUN 103)
- College algebra (MATH 105 OR MATH 108)
- Medical terminology (HS 222)
- Study of diverse populations/cultural diversity (many options available at UWM)

Admission to graduate-level dietetics programs is competitive so try and earn the highest grade you can in the prerequisite coursework and strive for a high GPA. Specific prerequisite courses and admissions requirements do vary (particularly the chemistry coursework) from program to program so be sure and research the ACEND-accredited programs (<https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/accredited-programs/about-accredited-programs/>) you are considering applying to.

There is no hiding the fact that pursuing a degree in nutritional sciences and dietetics requires you to take several science courses that may be quite challenging – particularly biology and chemistry. However, you do not have to be a rock star in these disciplines to pursue a career in this field. The world of nutrition and dietetics offers many career options that are more applied in nature and suit those individuals whose strengths lie in the areas of public health, social science, education, communication, and more.

For more information, contact:

- Lori Klos, PhD, RD, BS Nutritional Sciences Program Director, lklos@uwm.edu, 414-251-8220
- Angela Kowalski, MS, BS Nutritional Sciences Advisor, angelak@uwm.edu, 414-229-2758

I'm a new student. How do I start?

You are assigned an academic advisor upon admission to UWM. New Student Orientation (NSO) (<https://uwm.edu/healthsciences/students/new-student-orientation/>) helps those who are new to campus learn and understand the enrollment process and enroll in classes for their first semester at UWM! You should ask to have the designation "Pre-Dietetics" added to your academic record.

Consider enrolling in UWM's NUTR 101 offered every fall to learn more about your options in this exciting field.

Who is my advisor?

Undergraduate students who have declared an intent to pursue Pre-Dietetics are advised by Angela Kowalski. Contact Angela at 414-229-2758 or angelak@uwm.edu. (angelak@uwm.edu)

When should I meet with my advisor?

Students are encouraged to meet with their advisor at least once per semester to ensure timely progress to graduation.

- **Enrolling for spring semester?**
Schedule an appointment with your advisor in October or November.
- **Enrolling for fall semester?**
Schedule an appointment with your advisor in March or April.

Students are also welcome to schedule an appointment with their advisor at any time to discuss academic challenges, career opportunities, or any other questions.

How can my advisor help me?

CHS boasts professional academic advisors who understand the challenges of balancing academics, work, family, and the social aspects of college life. Advisors partner with you to:

- Explore your academic and career interests
- Plan the sequence of your courses
- Prepare for course enrollment
- Access tutoring and other academic support
- Identify opportunities for campus involvement
- Connect you to campus resources
- Plan for graduation