


# SDSU's Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) The Road to Becoming a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist

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# Overview

- Career opportunities with a degree in nutrition
- Why become a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN)?
- Steps to becoming an RDN
- Applying to and completing the SDSU Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD)
- Applying to and completing a dietetic internship

# WHAT CAN I DO WITH A DEGREE IN NUTRITION?

## BS Nutrition

- Degreed nutritionist

## BS Nutrition + DPD

- Registered diet tech (NDTR) – usually work in clinical or social services

## BS Nutrition + DPD + Graduate Degree + Dietetic Internship

- Registered dietitian nutritionist (RD/RDN)
- Beginning Jan 1, 2024, a graduate degree will be required to take the credentialing exam

## MS or PhD Nutrition

- 50% of practicing RDNs have a master's degree
- Teach at college/university level
- Research



# Clinical Nutrition Career Opportunities

- RDN usually required
- Many specialities
- Acute care/inpatient RDN – median salary \$67,700
- Ambulatory care/outpatient RDN – median salary \$69,300
- Long term care RDN – median salary \$69,000

# Food & Nutrition Management Career Opportunities

- Director, supervisor or manager
- Inpatient and long-term care facilities
- Schools
- Businesses
- Median salary \$93,200

# Community Nutrition Career Opportunities

- USDA Nutrition Assistance Program
  - Women, Infants & Children (WIC)
  - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
  - Child nutrition programs
  - Nutrition programs for older adults
- State or county public health department
- USDA cooperative extension system
- Meals on Wheels
- Mama's Kitchen
- Hunger relief organizations
- Median salary \$64,100

# Nutrition Education and Research Career Opportunities

- College, university, health professional school, and culinary school
- Teach K-12
- Create and write curriculum for state board of education, Cooperative Extension
- Worksite wellness--teach nutrition and health promotion to employees
- Manage or assist with clinical protocols, interventions, or clinical trials
- Median salary \$92,000

Source: Compensation & Benefits Survey of the Dietetics Profession, 2021



# Nutrition Consultation and Business Career Opportunities

- Private practice consultation to hospitals and long-term care facilities
- Client counseling from either physician referrals and/or advertisements
- Cookbook or textbook author
- Media
  - Radio, TV, magazines, newspapers
  - Social media, blogging
- Consult at health clubs, restaurants, supermarkets
- Median salary \$86,900



# Business and Industry Career Opportunities

- Food Industry
- Information Technology
- Nutritionals
- Nutraceuticals
- Pharmaceutical
- Food Service Equipment
- Food Service Contract Management
- Food Service Vendors
- Medical Equipment
- Trade Associations



# Other Career Opportunities

- International Food Organizations
    - Peace Corps
    - NGOs
    - UN Food and Agriculture Organization
  - Public Policy
    - Legislator staff
    - Lobbyist
    - USDA, NIH, FDA
    - Health care reform
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# Why Become a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist?

- RD/RDN only nationally recognized profession for nutrition expertise
- RD/RDN services included in state and federal regulations
- RD/RDN reimbursement under medical services
- RD/RDN one of fastest growing health careers
- RD/RDN nutrition expert, credibility, accountability

# The Road to Your RD/RDN

- Apply to the SDSU DPD
  - Must be advanced to Foods and Nutrition major or grad student in MS Nutrition or Dual MS
- Maintain grades for DPD
  - 3.1 overall GPA
  - 3.1 DPD course GPA
  - No DPD course grade less than a C
- Apply for and complete a graduate degree and then an accredited dietetic internship (DI) or a combined graduate degree and DI program
  - Minimum 1000 hours of supervised practice
  - Apply in Feb (spring match) or Sept (fall match)
- Take national registration exam



# SDSU DPD website

- <http://ens.sdsu.edu/dietetics.php>
- DPD handbook with portfolio instructions
- Courses in DPD curriculum
- DPD application process and forms
- Internship application process and forms



# Applying to the DPD

- As soon as you are eligible
- No later than two full semesters before you graduate
  - **By June 1 for May grads**
  - **By January 1 for December grads**
- Grade criteria met
- Download application from DPD website
- Official or unofficial transcripts
- Drop off application packet to Cathy Chavez in ENS main office or mail to Yumi at address on DPD website

# Staying in the DPD



## Required

- Complete Nutr 407, Nutr 409, Nutr 510
- Complete portfolio
- Maintain required grades/GPA

## Optional, but recommended

- Work or volunteer in the field
- Participate in SNO activities
- Get involved in the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and the San Diego district (CANDSD)

# What to Save for your Portfolio

- Refer to DPD Handbook
- Reflection statements for all nutrition courses taken at SDSU plus ENS 434
- Assignments, papers, projects, presentations from each nutrition course taken at SDSU plus ENS 434
- Completed grading rubrics showing grades for each required item





# Applying to an Accredited Dietetic Internship/Supervised Practice

- Attend DI Workshop – Friday 9/10 from 12:30-2:30pm

<https://SDSU.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUuf-CrpjgiHNeZNxSviPyMpMmSizti6lQu>

- Begin to research DIs

- Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics website:

<https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/accredited-programs/dietetic-internships>

- Internship websites

- Applicant Guide to Supervised Practice Experience online

- Considerations

- Location

- Cost

- Availability of financial aid and scholarships

- Emphasis

- Schedule

# Options for Dietetic Internships

- Traditional
- Distance
- Combined with MS
- WIC



# Resources

- DPD Instagram (@sdsudpd) and Facebook page  
<https://www.facebook.com/SDSU-Didactic-Program-in-Dietetics-357146781002100>
- Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and local SD chapter  
[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)  
<https://www.dietitian.org/san-diego>
- Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND)  
<https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend>
- Student Nutrition Organization  
<http://www.snosdsu.org/>





# Join SNO!

## Meeting Times/Dates

12:00pm to 1:00pm

September 13th

September 27th

October 11th

October 25th

November 8th

November 22nd

December 6th

## Location

Virtual (Zoom)



 @ SNO.SDSU

## SNO SDSU

The Student Nutrition Organization is a great way to get involved with your community and everything that encompasses nutrition and dietetics. We have bi-weekly meetings where we bring speakers of interest within our field of study. We also offer support, fun events, and study sessions throughout the semester!

To join, visit us at [snosdsu.org](http://snosdsu.org) and click "Become A Member" or scan the QR code below. If you have any questions feel free to message us at [sdsu.sno.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:sdsu.sno.secretary@gmail.com)

Hope to see you at the next meeting!

Join!



STUDENT NUTRITION ORGANIZATION



# Join the DPD Mentorship Program!

## Deadline to Sign-Up is Sept. 17th

This program is for students interested in or are already in the Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD). The mentors are graduating seniors and graduate students who are enrolled in Nutrition 409. Mentors and mentees will meet at least two times (virtual or in-person) over the semester.

This is a great opportunity to connect with upper-level students and professors. Get help navigating your way into the DPD, preparing portfolios, searching for internships & graduate programs, and enhance your knowledge of all possible future careers in dietetics

Sign up to be a mentee at [www.snosdsu.org](http://www.snosdsu.org)