

Requirements for Becoming a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN)

RD (Registered Dietitian) or RDN (Registered Dietitian Nutritionist) are interchangeable credentials denoting food and nutrition experts who have met the following education and professional criteria to earn and maintain the RDN credential.

Academic

Complete a minimum of a bachelor's degree at a U.S. regionally accredited university or college and accredited DPD coursework as approved by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. As stated in the accreditation standards, the DPD is a series of sequential courses designed to ensure the breadth and depth of required knowledge needed for entry level supervised practice dietetic internship, in order to become a registered dietitian nutritionist.

Traditional students enroll in an accredited program and complete the DPD as a part of their baccalaureate degree. Degree requirements are located in the University Catalog.

Students already holding a BS degree in any subject should consider applying to the master's degree (MS) program. If not admissible to the MS program, the Department of Dietetics & Nutrition (D&N) would then consider students for a second bachelor's degree. For further information, see **admissions information for graduate school**.

Students are awarded a Verification Statement after they have completed the DPD coursework (and have completed the bachelor's degree). Students will need this Verification Statement in order to enter a dietetic internship. The signed Verification Statement indicates that the student has completed the requirements of an accredited DPD.

Supervised Practice Requirements/Dietetic Internship Program

Accomplished by fulfilling either of the following requirements:

- Obtain a 1,200-hour accredited dietetic internship post-baccalaureate. There are over 250 accredited programs in the U.S. Appointments to dietetic internships are awarded on a very competitive basis through a computer matching process which occurs in November and April of each year.
- OR**
- Admission to a graduate school program integrating graduate-level academics with dietetic internship components. The Department of Dietetics & Nutrition has a separate application process dietetic internship opportunity.

Prospective applicants must review supervised practice program websites carefully for current information, including application deadlines, program requirements and tuition. The D&N department holds an Internship Workshop within the first month of fall and spring semesters, and interested parties should refer to the **Applicant Guide to Supervised Practice** or the **Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics** for more information about dietetic internships. Please read all information carefully.

NOTE: *In the past, this process has allowed internship programs to select from among the most qualified applicants in order to give them the opportunity to complete their education. More recently, however, the number of internship positions has remained relatively constant while the number of graduates from DPD programs has increased, leaving growing numbers of qualified students who are unable to complete their education and become Registered Dietitian Nutritionists. Current "match" rates are about 50 percent nationwide. To alleviate this problem,*

*in 2024, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is moving to a master's-degree-only internship requirement. Up to that year, you may still obtain an internship at the undergraduate level. To ensure that you will be successful in obtaining a dietetic internship, please see **Tips for Getting the Internship/Semester-by-Semester Guide in the "Current DPD Students" section** for more information.*

Registration Examination

With the two Verification Statements (one from DPD and one from an accredited dietetic internship), you will be able to sign up for the national RDN registration examination administered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR). Application to take the examination is made to CDR following verification of completion of the academic (DPD program) and supervised practice (Dietetic Internship program) requirements. Each Dietetic Internship program director will provide details regarding their program's application process.

All accredited DPD programs are required to report statistics on the exam pass rate within the first of year taking it. From the beginning of academic preparation, all should prepare to pass the exam at the first sitting.

Continuing Education

Complete 75 hours of continuing professional education (CPE) every five years to maintain registration status as a RDN. Continuing professional education is essential for lifelong maintenance and improvement of knowledge and skills for competent dietetics practice.

What is a Licensed/Certified Dietitian?

Many states have a certification or license requirement in order to practice dietetics. Each state requirement is different and information can be found on the state dietetic association website. Florida has a licensure requirement and the information can be found at

<http://www.floridahealth.gov/licensing-and-regulation/dietetic-nutrition/index.html>.