

ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW PROGRAM FOR THE MASTER OF SCIENCE IN DIETETICS

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors establish a new degree program, the Master of Science in Dietetics in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, effective fall term, 2021.

Background

The proposal is for a Master of Science in Dietetics degree which would be granted as part of the Coordinated Program in Dietetics, offered by the Department of Nutrition and Food Science (NFS), in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS). The degree will be abbreviated MS-CPD for this document. Although the MS-CPD would be a new program, it is modeled on our current undergraduate-level Coordinated Program in Dietetics (UG-CPD). The current UG-CPD is a professional program that offers the BS in Dietetics degree. This program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND), the accrediting body for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (Academy). The current UG-CPD program will no longer meet our students' needs as of January 1, 2024, due to an elevation of the degree requirement for a Registered Dietitian (RD) from an undergraduate to a graduate degree, as mandated by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR), the credentialing body for RDs. CDR determined that there was sufficient need for the elevated degree based, in part, on the precedent set by other allied health professions which have similarly increased their degree requirements (PT, OT, Pharmacy, etc.). Due to this new CDR requirement, the current UG-CPD at WSU is proposing to elevate our current curriculum to offer a graduate degree in place of the undergraduate degree.

Program Description

The MS-CPD will consist of a two-year (5 semester) professional program that begins in the fall semester. In addition to didactic coursework, students will complete 1200 hours of practical training (supervised practice during the two-year program at various locations around the Detroit metro area and in surrounding counties). Upon completion of the MS-CPD, the graduate is issued a Verification Statement, which provides the confirmation and verification that they have completed the appropriate coursework and supervised practical experience and are eligible to sit for the national examination, administered by CDR, to obtain the credential of RD.

Admission Requirements

Admission to the program is contingent upon admission to the Graduate School. The regular admission GPA requirement will be 3.3 and will be calculated from prerequisite coursework. Applicants will be required to have a BS/BA degree in nutrition or a Didactic Program in Dietetics Verification Statement to be admitted without any prerequisite coursework. Students with degrees in other disciplines must take prerequisite coursework in Chemistry, Psychology, Biology, Nutrition and Food Science, Management, and Statistics before applying. In addition, students will need two professional letters of recommendation, a personal statement, and must demonstrate interpersonal skills and written communication as part of the interview process.

Curriculum Requirements

The curriculum for the MS-CPD is based on the ACEND mandated criteria for program accreditation called the *2017 ACEND Knowledge and Competency Statements for Coordinated Programs*. The 11 didactic courses and 4 supervised practice experiences are based around 22 knowledge and 41 competency statements that must be achieved and demonstrated throughout the program. The curriculum is sequential and is completed over 2 years in 5 semesters.

Graduation Requirements

The total number of credit hours for the MS-CPD will be 42. Thirty (30) credits in coursework in the major, and 12 credits of supervised practice equating to 1200 hours of field experience. Required competencies must be achieved upon program completion, as mandated by ACEND; therefore, coursework is based on fulfilling those competencies sequentially, with no elective courses offered. The MS-CPD will culminate in a capstone course. The graduation requirements will remain the same as in the UG-CPD, specifically an overall GPA of 3.0 or better and a “B” or better in all supervised practice and didactic coursework.

Program Administration

The administrative structure for the MS-CPD will remain the same as for the current UG-CPD. All program decisions involving recruitment, admissions, advising, evaluation, and curriculum development are made by the program director, in consultation with program faculty. A special Advisory Committee has also been established, as mandated by ACEND, to provide advice and guidance to the program in all the areas mentioned above. This committee meets annually and is composed of program preceptors and educators from other dietetic programs in the area. Since the proposed MS-CPD will be a graduate program in the Department of Nutrition and Food Sciences, the NFS Graduate Officer will be included as a member of the Advisory Committee.

Budget and Resource Requirements

The proposed MS-CPD will continue to operate with the same resources and costs as the current UG-CPD, which has been in existence since 1980. There are no new resources or costs associated with elevating the program to the graduate level. All courses except one (NFS 7800 Master’s Capstone in Dietetics) are already established courses offered by faculty in the program or in the NFS department and are included in current teaching loads. The new course will be developed, and team taught by the two MS-CPD faculty.

Accreditation

The MS-CPD will be accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics. The current UG-CPD last received continuation of its full accredited in June 2015, and the accreditation expires December 31, 2022. The next program review and self-study reports for re-accreditation are due between August and December 2022. The change from an UG-CPD to a MS-CPD for ACEND requires completion of a *Substantive Changes* form to be completed and submitted to ACEND at least 12 weeks prior to implementation of the change. This form will be submitted to ACEND upon approval of the degree by WSU.

Submitted by: Laurie Lauzon Clabo, Interim Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Approvals

The proposal was approved by the faculty of the Department of Nutrition and Food Science, CLAS Faculty Council and Faculty Assembly, the Dean of the CLAS, the Graduate Council, the Dean of the Graduate School, and the Interim Provost.