

University of South Carolina

**Master of Science in
Performance Nutrition and Dietetics**

Student Handbook

April 2025

Table of Contents

Foreword.....	3
Arnold School of Public Health	4
Department of Exercise Science	4
The M.S. in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics Program	5
Mission Statement	5
Goals and Objectives.....	5
ACEND Accreditation	6
The Future Education Model – Standards and Competencies	6
USC MS/PND Program Curriculum.....	7
Program Completion & Verification Statement Requirements	8
Program Schedule	9
Program Cost Estimates	9
Applying to the USC MS/PND Program.....	11
Application Process	11
Admission Requirements	11
Integrated Learning.....	13
Didactic Courses	13
Program Workshops	13
Supervised Experiences (SE)	13
Preparation for Supervised Experiences	14
Supervised Experiential Learning Documentation.....	17
Expectations of USC MS/PND Students	17
Individualized Development Plan (IDP)	19
Preceptor’s Role and Responsibilities in Supervised Experiences	19
Communication Within the Program	20
Rights and Responsibilities of the Student	22
Code of Ethics	23
MS/PND Program Policies and Procedures	25
Equitable Treatment	25
Advising.....	26
Master’s Program of Study (M-POS).....	27
Grades	27

Progression	27
Qualifying Exams.....	28
Student Performance Monitoring.....	29
Student Remediation and Retention	30
Disciplinary/Termination Procedures	30
Leave of Absence	30
Prior Learning/Transferring Credits	31
Withdrawal from the Program.....	31
Policy on Professionalism.....	31
Protection of Privacy of Information	33
Equal Opportunity.....	34
Grievance Procedure/Filing a Complaint	34
USC Graduate School Policies and Regulations	35
Student Support Services & Resources.....	35
Becoming a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist	41
Future Education Model Pathway (applies to the USC MS/PND program)	41
FYI: Traditional Pathway	41
Maintenance of RDN Credential	42
Professional Organizations in Nutrition and Dietetics.....	42
APPENDIX.....	0
Prerequisite Course Requirements	1
USC MS PND Prerequisite GPA Calculation Form	2
Example USC MS/PND Road Map	6
Individual Development Plan (IDP) for Graduate Students	7
SE Hour Tracking Form.....	14
2022 ACEND Competencies and Performance Indicators	16
Competencies, Standards & Scope for RDNs.....	30
Example Certificates of Insurance.....	31
Student Handbook Confirmation of Receipt & Statement of Agreement.....	37

Foreword

Welcome!

On behalf of the faculty and staff of the Master of Science in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics (MS/PND) program of the Department of Exercise Science in the Arnold School of Public Health, we wish to extend you a genuine welcome. It is our sincere wish that you find personal and professional growth as a MS/PND student at the University of South Carolina.

This Student Handbook is a guide that provides information about the program and the educational process you are embarking upon. The information presented here outlines the policies and procedures that specifically pertain to you as a student within the MS/PND program. Please also see the University of South Carolina Graduate Studies Academic Bulletin (<https://academicbulletins.sc.edu/graduate/>) for university policies and procedures.

Please do not hesitate to consult with any MS/PND faculty member for further clarification and information. The faculty and staff of the program are here to help you attain your goals throughout your academic career.

Thank you!

University of South Carolina

Faculty & Staff of the MS/PND Program

Arnold School of Public Health

The MS/PND program is a vital part of the Department of Exercise Science housed in the Arnold School of Public Health, which also includes the departments of: Communication Sciences & Disorders; Environmental Health Sciences; Epidemiology/Biostatistics; Health Promotion, Education, & Behavior; and Health Services Policy & Management.

The Arnold School of Public Health is one of fifteen colleges and schools within the University of South Carolina. The Arnold School of Public Health offers 36 degree and certificate options from undergraduate to graduate across nine disciplines. The nation's sixth highest NIH-funded public university school of public health, it is home to the nation's No. 1 Exercise Science doctoral program, according to the National Academy of Kinesiology. USC's exercise and sport science programs also rank No. 4 in the nation, according to ShanghaiRanking's Global Ranking of Sport Science Schools and Departments.

Department of Exercise Science

The mission of the Department of Exercise Science is “to promote an environment of excellence and achievement in human health and performance”. The MS/PND program is one of five accredited graduate degree programs within the department (e.g., M.S. in Athletic Training, M.S. in Advanced Athletic Training, M.P.H. in Physical Activity and Public Health, Doctor of Physical Therapy). Accreditation ensures that these programs meet the educational standards required to prepare competent entry-level practitioners in the corresponding fields.

The strategic positioning of this performance nutrition program amongst athletic training, public health, and physical therapy programs as well as the triad of exercise science programs (B.S., M.S., and Ph.D.) within the Department of Exercise Science supports the unique focus on the intersection of nutrition/dietetics, health, and human performance through shared resources, environment, and culture. Interprofessional collaborations and shared learning experiences within the department expand the reach of expert knowledge and perspective resulting in higher achievement of our graduates.

The M.S. in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics Program

Mission Statement

The mission of the Master of Science in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics program at University of South Carolina is to provide an educational experience that will prepare competent, entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists for practice across regional and global communities. We are committed to providing learning experiences that emphasize the utility and application of nutrition in health and human performance. We aim to provide our community with master's-prepared dietitian nutritionists that apply evidence-based nutrition and dietetics information in an ethical and responsible manner. We engage in transparent and equitable conduct that enhances student, faculty, and stakeholder morale.

Goals and Objectives

Program Goal 1: The program graduates will have strong feelings of occupational self-efficacy in their ability to practice as entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists.

Objectives:

- At least 80% of program students complete program requirements within 3 years (150% of the program length).
- At least 80% of program graduates take the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists within 12 months of program completion.
- At least 80% of program graduates who respond to a post-graduation survey within six months of graduation will rate their occupational self-efficacy as an entry-level registered dietitian nutritionist as average or above.

Program Goal 2: The program graduates will be competent, entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists in a variety of practice settings.

Objectives:

- Of graduates who seek employment, at least 80% are employed in nutrition and dietetics or related fields within 12 months of graduation.
- The program's one-year pass rate (graduates who pass the registration exam within one year of first attempt) on the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists is at least 80%.
- At least 80% of employers who complete a survey on program graduates report that the graduate "meets" or "exceeds" expectations for entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists in terms of professional competency.
- 80% of program graduates who respond to a post-graduation survey within six months of graduation will rate their competence as entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists as average or above.

Program Goal 3: The program graduates will apply nutrition care in unique and innovative ways to promote improvement of health and human performance.

Objectives:

- At least 80% of graduates who complete an alumni survey report that they promote improvement of health and human performance within their professional practice on an "often" or "very often" basis.
- At least 80% of graduates who complete an alumni survey will provide at least one example of unique and innovative nutrition care that they applied in professional practice.
- At least 80% of graduates who complete an alumni survey will report engaging in at least one effort that advocates for the utilization of registered dietitian nutritionists that specialize in performance nutrition.

ACEND Accreditation

The USC MS/PND program is a candidate for accreditation by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND) which is located at 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000, Chicago, IL 60660-6995. Find more information and contact resources visit <http://www.eatrightacend.org/ACEND/> or call (1-800-877-1600 ext. 5400).

The USC MS/PND program is recognized by ACEND as an early adopter demonstration program following ACEND's *Future Education Model Standards for Graduate Programs*. The program curriculum includes competency-based education that integrates didactic and supervised learning experiences necessary to prepare students to pass the registration exam and practice as competent, entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists. See below for more information.

The Future Education Model – Standards and Competencies

The USC MS/PND program is a demonstration program that uses the *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards for Graduate Degree Programs in Nutrition and Dietetics* developed by ACEND.

What does it mean to be a demonstration program following the Future Education Model Accreditation Standards?

In efforts to improve dietetics education and to better prepare entry-level dietetics practitioners, ACEND has developed a new model for education with the aim of advancing the profession. This model focuses on competency-based education as opposed to time- or action-based education. Students receive personalized learning opportunities and progress based on their skills and abilities. Experiential learning is integrated throughout the program and is present in both the didactic and supervised experience courses. While the didactic courses will include experiential learning activities that may occur in the classroom, the experiential learning activities within the supervised experience courses will occur in rotations in professional settings with a variety of qualified preceptors.

The focus is more on progressing towards achievement of competencies rather than completing specified activities in a specific number of hours. The learning assessments move beyond that of “Did the student complete all the items on an activity list?” to “How well did the student demonstrate understanding and application of competencies during learning experiences?”

Students will be provided with a copy of the FEM Standards as well as the competencies and performance indicators during the program orientation. A copy of the professional competencies and performance indicators is found in the appendix of this handbook. For future reference, you can go to <https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend> and download copies of the FEM Standards for Graduate Degree Programs and refer to the Professional Competencies and Performance Indicators within the appendix.

The FEM Graduate program competencies and performance indicators will be reviewed in the student orientation. The program director and program faculty will work together to 1) determine the competencies and performance indicators that are present/embedded in each course and rotation; and 2) determine the appropriate assessment tools for student performance evaluation.

USC MS/PND Program Curriculum

The MS/PND program consists of a full-time curriculum design that integrates both didactic coursework and 1200+ hours of supervised experiences in professional settings into 44-credit hours. The program curriculum is based on ACEND's professional competencies (37) and performance indicators (220) which are embedded within the didactic and supervised experience (SE) courses. The program curriculum builds upon foundational knowledge in basic sciences, human nutrition, and food science. Please refer to the "Prerequisite Course Requirements" within the appendix for a list of courses that applicants must complete prior to beginning the program.

The foundational didactic courses include Nutrition Through the Life Cycle; Applied Nutrition Research; Nutrition & Public Health; Medical Nutrition Therapy I & II; Nutrition Counseling & Education; and Food Systems Management. The performance nutrition focused courses include Performance Nutrition; Performance Nutrition: Approaches & Advocacy; Performance Nutrition Therapy; and Leadership & Practice in Performance Nutrition & Dietetics.

The five SE courses include individualized schedules indicating the designated rotations and preceptors for each student enrolled in the course. Students will learn in a variety of different settings with preceptors including RDNs and other interdisciplinary professionals. Research, community, food systems management, nutrition therapy, and performance nutrition settings are included within the SE courses.

Incorporating SE courses alongside didactic courses throughout the program allows for opportunities of direct application of knowledge and theory.

The SE courses progress from level 1 to level 5 as they rely on prior knowledge and skill gained in previous courses and experiences. For example, the level 1 PNDI 711 course will consist of a nutrition research rotation and will be taken after the PNDI 700 Applied Nutrition Research course has been completed. Adherence to the SE course prerequisites (e.g., successful completion of specific course(s) and/or qualifying exams) and co-requisites will ensure student preparedness for field experience.

For each supervised experience course, each student will receive:

1. **PND SE Schedule** – schedule of planned rotation(s) unique to each student.
2. **Rotation Profile(s)** –rotation, facility, and lead preceptor descriptions unique to each rotation.
3. **Rotation Agenda(s)** – information, unique to each student, on day-to-day or week-to-week schedules, activities, assessments, and evaluations within a rotation.

Workshops (e.g., seminars, bootcamps, conferences) are included in multiple supervised experience courses (e.g., PNDI 712, 713, and 714) to enhance the program curriculum. These workshops include ManageFirst certification classes and Nutrition Skills workshops that will provide additional learning experiences related to topics such as diabetes management, nutrition communication, enteral nutrition support, nutrition-focused physical exam, and parenteral nutrition support.

Finally, a capstone course (PNDI 780) is provided in the last semester of the program to offer a summative learning experience in which students evaluate their own achievement of professional competencies within the program. The capstone course also prepares students to take the RDN exam, search for jobs, interview, mentor, and continue to build their competency with life-long learning plans.

See the program of study below which is published in the [USC Academic Bulletin](#) along with [course descriptions](#). The program of study lists all credit hour requirements in the anticipated order of completion.

Program of Study - USC M.S. in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics

Fall 1		9 cr.
PNDI 620	Nutrition Through the Life Cycle	3
PNDI 700	Applied Nutrition Research	3
PNDI 701	Performance Nutrition	3
Spring 1		10 cr.
PNDI 705	Performance Nutrition: Approaches & Advocacy	3
PNDI 710	Medical Nutrition Therapy I	3
PNDI 752	Nutrition & Public Health	3
PNDI 711	Performance Nutrition and Dietetics Supervised Experience Level 1	1
Summer 1		5 cr.
PNDI 730	Nutrition Counseling & Education	3
PNDI 712	Performance Nutrition and Dietetics Supervised Experience Level 2	1
PNDI 713	Performance Nutrition and Dietetics Supervised Experience Level 3	1
Fall 2		10 cr.
PNDI 740	Medical Nutrition Therapy II	3
PNDI 750	Performance Nutrition Therapy	3
PNDI 770	Food Systems Management	3
PNDI 714	Performance Nutrition and Dietetics Supervised Experience Level 4	1
Spring 2		10 cr.
PNDI 760	Leadership & Practice in Performance Nutrition & Dietetics	3
PUBH 700	Perspectives in Public Health (Online)	3
PNDI 780	Performance Nutrition & Dietetics Capstone	3
PNDI 715	Performance Nutrition and Dietetics Supervised Experience Level 5	1
Total		44 cr.

Please see the 'Example USC MS/PND Road Map' in the appendix of this handbook to see additional information including course prerequisites, SE content emphasis, supplementary learning activities, and placement of qualifying exams.

Students who have not previously completed a Medical Terminology course and who are not ServSafe certified must inform and coordinate with the program director to promote successful progression in the program.

Program Completion & Verification Statement Requirements

All program students must successfully complete the 44-credit hour requirement, achieve all ACEND competencies, and a minimum of 1200 supervised experience hours to graduate from the program with the Master of Science in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics degree and a verification statement indicating eligibility to take the RDN exam. Successful completion includes achieving all ACEND professional competencies by earning a rating or score equivalent to "meets expectations" or above.

Students are encouraged to complete these requirements within 150% of the 22-month program timeline (within 33 months).

Program Schedule

The USC MS/PND program is an intensive 22-month program that requires students to complete learning experiences beyond the classroom. The [USC academic calendar](#) will apply in that each semester is approximately 16-weeks in duration with observed holidays and breaks. The didactic courses within the program will follow the USC academic calendar and class will not convene during Fall/Spring Breaks and dedicated holidays. Please see the 'Course Schedule' within each didactic course syllabus.

The USC academic calendar will be considered in the scheduling of all program workshops, qualifying exams, and supervised experience rotations. The program director will provide the schedule of all workshops a minimum of 4 weeks in advance. Students may be encouraged to engage in experiential learning and independent study (i.e., out-of-classroom learning assessments) during holiday breaks. Students will not be required to engage in experiential learning on single-day holidays including but not limited to two of the 5 days of Diwali, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Kwanza, two of the 8 nights of Hannukah, New Year's Day, Easter, Passover, etc. Students may be able to participate supervised experience activities during government holidays including Labor Day, Veterans Day, President's Day, etc. The program does not provide personal time off (PTO), wellness days, or any vacation time to students beyond the school recognized days off. Please refer to the [USC Academic Calendar](#) for updates.

Students are expected to request excuses for anticipated absences related to personal/religious holidays that conflict with their academic schedules to their instructors, preceptors, advisor and/or the program director. These requests should be submitted in writing (documented) and include the dates, reason, supporting documentation, and requests for make-up work. Arrangements will be made for all legitimate holiday accommodation requests. To request excuses for absences that cannot be anticipated (i.e., legal proceedings, illness, unexpected family emergency, etc.) students should submit the written request with the information mentioned above as soon as reasonably possible.

Time commitments differ per semester and are highly dependent on courseload. Three hours per credit of didactic course work per week (i.e., 9 hours per course per week) and 15-30 hours per week for each rotation per week are values that can be used to determine approximate time commitment.

Program Cost Estimates

It is important that applicants and students are aware of the financial commitments entailed in completing the MS/PND program. Updated tuition and required fees for graduate study at USC can be reviewed on the [Bursar's Office](#) webpage and the [Financial Aid and Scholarship Office](#) webpage. The following is a table of estimated costs that students will incur throughout the program. Please recognize that these figures are estimates of the financial commitment that students must make to complete the program and are meant to be used as a guide. Please read about [establishing residency in SC](#) on the University Registrar webpage.

MS/PND - Year 1	Academic Year 2025-2026				
Full-Time Tuition	Fall	Spring	Summer	Total (Resident)	Total (Non-resident)
Resident	\$6,867	\$6,867	\$2,861.25	\$16,595.25	
Non-Resident	\$14,880	\$14,880	\$6,200		\$35,960
Fees					
Technology Fee	\$200	\$200		\$400	\$400
Health Fee	\$190	\$190		\$380	\$380
Health Insurance ¹	\$1,545.50	\$1,545.50	\$0	\$3,091	\$3,091
Program Fee	\$800	\$800	\$800	\$2,400	\$2,400
Total Tuition & Fees				\$22,866.25	\$42,231
Other Expenses					
Books, Supplies, Equipment	\$400	\$400	\$200	\$1,000	\$1,000
Cost of living (rent, utilities, food, transport) \$1978/month ²	\$7,912	\$9,890	\$5,934	\$23,736	\$23,736
Total Estimated Cost for Year 1				\$47,602.25	\$66,967
MS/PND - Year 2	Academic Year 2026-2027				
Tuition	Fall	Spring	Summer	Total (Resident)	Total (Non-resident)
Resident	\$6,867	\$6,867	\$0	\$13,734	
Non-Resident	\$14,880	\$14,880	\$0		\$29,760
Fees					
Technology Fee	\$200	\$200		\$400	\$400
Health Fee	\$190	\$190		\$380	\$380
Health Insurance ¹	\$1,545.50	\$1,545.50	\$0	\$3,091	\$3,091
Program Fee	\$800	\$800	\$0	\$1,600	\$1,600
Total Tuition & Fees				\$19,205	\$35,231
Other Expenses					
Books, Supplies, Equipment	\$400	\$400	\$0	\$800	\$800
Cost of living (rent, utilities, food, transport) \$1978/month ²	\$7,912	\$9,890	\$0	\$17,802	\$17,802
Total Estimated Cost for Year 2				\$37,807	\$53,833
Total Program Tuition and Fees				\$42,071.25	\$77,462
Total Estimated Cost				\$85,409.25	\$120,800

¹USC Health Insurance charge is required for graduate students (9 credit hours or more); proof of insurance is required to be eligible for exemption of this coverage.

²Cost of living estimates in Columbia, SC from LivingCost.org

Applying to the USC MS/PND Program

Application Process

The application process will vary depending on the applicant's desired start date.

All applicants interested in applying to be part of the inaugural cohort **starting in the Fall of 2025** will apply directly through the USC Graduate School and bypass the DICAS application process mentioned below. See the application link provided in the MS/PND program webpage.

All applicants interested in applying to start the program in the **Fall of 2026 and after** will need to complete the USC MS/PND application in the Dietetic Individualized Centralized Application System ([DICAS](#)) application. Applicants must pay the DICAS application fee. All application materials are to be submitted to DICAS within the [DICAS Application Cycle Dates](#). For example, applicants can create a DICAS account, request recommendations, and submit applications between July 24th, 2049, through July 14th, 2050.

Applications will be screened by the Graduate Student Services in the ASPH Office of Admissions and Enrollment Management to determine if all materials were submitted and if the applicant meets all admission criteria. The materials are then provided to the program director who shares with the Admissions & Curriculum Committee. After reviewing the applications, the finalists will be contacted to schedule phone/video interviews. Accepted applicants will be notified via email and mail by the Director of Graduate School Admissions. Candidates will be able to enroll in the two-three months prior to their start date.

Admission Requirements

Below is a list of the admission requirements. Please note that fulfilling these requirements does not guarantee acceptance into the program. All applications are reviewed and scored by the Admission & Curriculum Committee to recommend which applicants to accepted into the program.

- Minimum of a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university
- MS/PND Program application i
- Official transcripts from all post-secondary institutions
- Resume or Curriculum Vitae
- *International applicants must provide: (see below for more information)
 - International transcript evaluation records
 - And TOEFL or IELTS scores (as appropriate)
- Completion of all required course prerequisites (credit hours):
 - Human Nutrition (3)
 - Food Science (3)
 - Biology (3)
 - Chemistry (3)
 - Microbiology (3)
 - Organic Chemistry (3)
 - Biochemistry (3)
 - Human Physiology (3)
 - Exercise Physiology (3)
 - Psychology or Sociology (3)

- Statistics (3)
- Applicants may present evidence of plans to complete up to 3 of these prerequisite courses with completion dates prior to the first day of classes in the MS/PND program.
- Preferred course prerequisite: Medical Terminology (1-3 credit hours or equivalent)
 - Applicants are encouraged to apply even if they have not completed this preferred prerequisite.
 - Admitted students who have not completed a previous medical terminology course will be required to complete a designated self-study equivalent within the first semester of the program.
 - Please see the program director for a current list of the accepted self-study options to fulfill this requirement.
- Minimum GPA from bachelor's and all prerequisites of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.
- Must earn a grade of B or higher in the introductory Human Nutrition course.
- GPA Calculation Form that displays GPA of prerequisite courses. (In the appendix.)
- Three letters of recommendation (preferred that both professional and academic are included)
- Application Essay addressing the following:
 - Applicant's motivation to become a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist and career goals.
 - Highlights of applicant's experience/exposure to the professional field of dietetics (ex. shadowing, professional conferences, volunteer and/or paid work)
 - Aspects of the USC MS/PND program that appeal/interest the applicant.
 - What does the applicant hope to gain from the USC MS/PND program (beyond fulfilling the requirements to sit for the RDN exam)?
 - Aspects of the applicant's character and experience that align with the program mission and that indicate potential to support the program goals and objectives.

Candidates for admission will be scheduled for a virtual interview with the program Admissions & Curriculum Committee for approximately 15-20 minutes to discuss the application essay, previous experience, and potential success in the USC MS/PND program.

*International applicants must obtain an official evaluation of their credentials unless applicants have a degree or sufficient coursework from an accredited U.S. college or university. They must also submit an official copy of a transcript evaluation by World Education Services (<https://www.wes.org/>).

*International applicants, who did not earn a degree from an English-based institution, must take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and achieve a minimum score of 80 (internet-based)/230 (computer-base)/570 (paper-based) or higher on the TOEFL or 6.5 or higher on the IELTS overall band score. These English proficiency test scores can be submitted in the DICAS form.

There are no prior learning assessments as we do not evaluate non-credit prior learning experiences. No credit will be awarded to students for non-credit prior learning experiences including professional and volunteer work experience.

Integrated Learning

Didactic Courses

Applied learning is an educational theme that resonates throughout the curriculum. The didactic courses within this program will include reading, writing, attending/watching lectures, notetaking, discussions, projects, group work, presentations, etc. In addition to these traditional methods, these courses will also include simulations, role playing, on-site visits to facilities, case studies, and other types of experiential learning activities. These experiential activities ensure that students can apply the course information to real-life scenarios.

Distance Education Technology Requirements: Although the program is on-ground and in-person, students will be required to engage in online activities. Students are required to have access to digital devices (e.g., cellular phone, computer, etc.) to appropriately communicate with advisors and instructors as well as complete assigned learning assessments. This will include a computer with wi-fi connecting capability, camera, microphone, speakers, and internet access. Digital information will need to be kept secure and confidential with digital password protection. Students' login credentials will serve as their personal identifier and should never be shared.

Program Workshops

Nutrition Skills workshops have been incorporated into the program curriculum to enhance the learning experience and provide alternative learning experiences. The umbrella term 'workshop' includes seminars, bootcamps, conferences, and other supplemental activities. Costs of the workshops are included in the program fees. Nutrition Skills workshops may include diabetes management, communication skills, enteral nutrition support including tube feeding placement, parenteral (intravenous) nutrition support, nutrition-focused physical exams, and more. Students will gain more opportunities to practice nutrition therapy, counseling, and analytical skills in these focused sessions. Additional areas of focus will include ManageFirst certificate workshops that enhance food safety, food service, and food systems management knowledge and skills. Students will be able to earn industry-approved certificates in foodservice safety, controlling food costs, as well as human resource management and supervision.

Supervised Experiences (SE)

Supervised experience courses (PNDI 711-715) are included in the program curriculum. In these courses, students will gain experience in professional settings under the supervision of preceptors (professionals volunteering to teach and mentor students about their organization, position, role, and duties). The main areas of the field covered in these supervised experiences include Performance Nutrition, Nutrition Research, Community Nutrition, Food Systems Management, and Nutrition Therapy. Many of these areas overlap and therefore are not separated into one SE.

For each SE course, students will be provided individualized SE Schedules that reveal the different rotations and associated preceptors that the student will engage with in that course. Students may not all have the same preceptors or be in the same settings but will gain experience with the same skill sets. For example, one student may work with a private practice RDN providing in-home nutrition counseling to families with children with autism and another student may work with an outpatient dietitian providing diabetes management nutrition counseling. Both students will refer to didactic knowledge for

each scenario and both students will gain real-life experience with providing nutrition services using the nutrition care process.

SE assignments are dependent on the arrangements made between the MS/PND program and the preceptors/facilities. Each SE will vary in the number of preceptors and facilities to which a student is assigned and not all students will have the same schedules, preceptors, and experiences. However, they will all be gaining experiences that assist their progression toward achieving the same competencies. Each SE will address multiple professional competencies despite having a particular emphasis. For example, a Performance Nutrition rotation may include nutrition counseling, nutrition therapy, nutrition education, food procurement and preparation, and nutrition advocacy.

Each of the SE courses is designed to provide approximately 240 hours of experience for a total of 1200 hours across all 5 courses. Deviation from these plans may occur as necessary to meet student learning needs. For example, a student may need more experience with one-on-one nutrition counseling and therefore may require more time in a nutrition therapy rotation. Another example is that a student may excel and achieve competency early and require less time in a particular rotation. Student needs and performance will be considered when planning and adapting SE course schedules and rotation agendas.

Upon successful completion of the didactic and supervised experiences courses, students will earn a verification statement revealing their eligibility to take the RDN credentialing exam. A grade of “C” or higher is required for all didactic courses; a cumulative GPA of 3.0; documentation of a minimum of 1200 program-based SE hours; and an overall ranking of “meets expectations” or “exceeds expectations” on all competencies as revealed in the ‘Professional Competency Self-Assessment and Portfolio’ culminating project are required to graduate.

Preparation for Supervised Experiences

Foundational Knowledge: Students within the program are required to have completed a specific list of course prerequisites prior to entrance into the program (Refer to the list of prerequisite courses in the appendix). This ensures that students are entering with knowledge in life sciences and math among other subjects. Successful completion of a basic human nutrition course is a required prerequisite.

Orientation Requirements: Once accepted, students complete program orientation requirements prior to starting in the fall semester. The program orientation requirements include attending the program orientation, HIPAA training, CPR/AED training, Bloodborne Pathogens training, vaccinations, certified background check, and membership in the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics ([AND](#)), American Sports and Performance Dietitians Association ([ASPD](#)), the AND Sports and Human Performance Nutrition ([SHPN](#)) Dietetics Practice Group, South Carolina AND ([SCAND](#)), and the Columbia Midlands Dietetics Association ([CMDA](#)). Students will complete an orientation workshop within the first week of the first semester. The orientation workshop will review the following topics in detail: the USC MS/PND Student Handbook, program policies and procedures, Individual Development Plans, student performance tracking and evaluations, program culture, methods of communication and feedback, student rights, expectations of students/faculty/preceptors, equitable treatment of students, ACEND Competencies and Performance Indicators, supervised learning experience facilities/preceptors, support services and resources, etc.

Distance Education Technology Requirements: Although the program is on-ground and in-person, students will be required to engage in online activities. Students are required to have access to digital

devices (e.g., cellular phone, computer, etc.) to appropriately communicate with preceptors and complete assigned learning assessments. This will include a computer with wi-fi connecting capability, camera, microphone, speakers, and internet access. Digital information will need to be kept secure and confidential with digital password protection. Students' login credentials will serve as their personal identifier and should never be shared.

Insurance Requirements: Students are required to maintain four types of insurance during their time in the MS/PND program: general tort liability, professional medical liability, health insurance, and auto insurance (as applicable). Students are also required to sign a form releasing the university from liability.

General Tort Liability and Medical Professional Liability insurance will be provided to the students by the USC MS/PND program and is included in the program fees. The Department of Exercise Science communicates with the USC [Office of Enterprise Risk Management & Insurance](#) annually to arrange this insurance for all students registered in the MS/PND program. Please see the certificates of insurance evidencing coverage for both policies in the appendix.

Students are responsible for their own transportation and safety when traveling to and from assigned areas and supervised experiential learning facilities. If driving, students are responsible for maintaining a valid driver's license and auto insurance that covers liability. Students must provide evidence of insurance coverage to the program director on or before their initial enrollment. Visit the [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics website](#) to learn more about member discounts on insurance.

Student Health Insurance Plan

Students are automatically enrolled in the Student Health Insurance Plan upon registration. For more information on this comprehensive health insurance plan, please visit https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/health_services/insurance-payments/required-health-insurance/student-health-insurance-plan.php

Health Insurance Subsidy

All graduate assistants (i.e., graduate students fully hired in a graduate assistantship position) enrolled in at least 6 credit hours are eligible for the health insurance subsidy provided by the University. For more information, please visit: https://sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/graduate_school/paying_for_graduate_school/health_insurance_subsidy/index.php

Trainings

Diversity & Inclusion: MS/PND students will be required to complete diversity and inclusion trainings within their first semester of the program. These include the [Bystander Intervention Training](#): Gamecocks Stand Up provided by Student Health and Well-Being wellness services and the [Office of Multicultural Student Affairs](#) educational offerings on social justice: [Knowledge Intensity Training \(KIT\) modules](#).

HIPPA: Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act - HIPAA information is available at [HIPAA \(http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa/\)](http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa/).

Human Subject's (Human Subjects Research or HRSA): Training and certificates related to human subjects can be obtained from HRSA (<https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/education-and-outreach/human-research-protection-training/human-research-protection-foundational-training/index.html>).

Basic Life Support (BLS): <https://cpr.heart.org/en/cpr-courses-and-kits/healthcare-professional/basic-life-support-bls-training>

Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS): <https://cpr.heart.org/en/cpr-courses-and-kits/healthcare-professional/acls>

Tests and Immunizations

Students need to provide documentation that they are up to date on the following immunizations:

- Hepatitis B (hepB vaccine series and an anti- HBs serologic test 1-2 months after the final dose)
- Influenza – annually
- Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) – 2 dose series
- Varicella – 2 dose series or up-to-date blood test revealing immunity.
- Tetanus, Diptheria, Pertussis (Tdap) – 1 dose and Td booster every 10 years thereafter
- Meningococcal – The MenACWY conjugate vaccine protects against 4 serogroups and MenB protects against one serogroup.
- COVID-19

Students should be aware that some facilities will require that they show proof of testing for Tuberculosis and completion of the Hepatitis B series of shots before starting a supervised learning experience. Proof of having a Tetanus shot within a defined period may also be required. Information related to various kinds of immunizations that may be needed can be found at the following CDC sites: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/rec-vac/hcw.html> and <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/index.html>.

Some facilities may also require a Food Handler's Permit. In this case, please follow the facility protocol in obtaining the permit and refer to following website for more information: <https://scdhec.gov/food-safety/retail-food-industry/laws-applications/food-safety-how-apply-food-permit> and <https://scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/Library/CR-012887.pdf>

Background Checks and Drug Testing

Students in facilities with youth may be asked to complete a criminal background check. Background checks can be obtained through the police department. Facilities requiring such checks may also have avenues for completion of this requirement.

Many facilities also require completion of a drug test prior to starting a Supervised Experience. If not provided by the facility, the student will be physically and financially responsible for the drug test. Some facilities may complete random drug testing. To read more about The Drug-Free Workplace Act see Chapter 107 of Title 44 in the South Carolina Code of Laws on the South Carolina Legislature website: <https://www.scstatehouse.gov/code/t44c107.php>

Students are responsible for any costs associated with the clearance process.

Supervised Experiential Learning Documentation

Injury or Illness while in a SE facility

Students are expected to immediately report any injury or illness that occurred while they were engaged in a supervised experience in a professional setting to their assigned preceptor, their advisor, and the Program Director. The student and preceptor will follow the policies and procedures of the facility and complete the proper documentation as well as follow-up (i.e., medical treatment, workplace injury report, etc.). The Program Director will follow up with the appropriate parties at the SE facility and the student to ensure comprehensive measures are utilized to address and resolve the issue.

SE Hour Documentation

Students are responsible for documenting the time they spend engaged in experiential learning throughout the program. The primary method for tracking these hours will be the digital competency tracking software while the backup/secondary tracking method will be the utilization of the SE Hour Tracking Form (see the template in the appendix). Students must document a minimum of 1200 hours of approved supervised experience to graduate. The program curriculum is designed to provide 1200 hours of supervised experience in professional settings and over 600 hours of alternate experiential learning hours in a variety of settings including classroom, laboratory, on-campus, and during independent study.

Expectations of USC MS/PND Students

Below is a list of characteristics and expectations of students enrolled in our program.

Positive – Our students are expected to have a positive attitude and show enthusiasm regarding their learning experiences. Students are expected to communicate gratitude and appreciation, on a regular basis, to every preceptor, faculty, and staff member that has invested in them. Students should approach potential issues with curiosity as opposed to judgement prior to contributing to solution development. Students are expected to self-advocate in a positive manner when they feel that one or more of their needs are not being fulfilled. Students are to project a positive image and represent our program as respectful, inclusive, and grateful individuals.

Open – Communication is valued in our program. Timing, method, and professionalism of communication are the key factors that our students are expected to consider in all communications within the program. Appropriate timing of communication includes during scheduled appointments, at routine check-in points, at planned meetings, and during evaluation and feedback activities. Students may freely schedule appointments with the program director and faculty/advisor for additional discussion outside of the provided pathways. Our students are expected to tactfully communicate their thoughts, questions, concerns, goals, and needs regarding their learning experiences while in the program. Students are expected to self-advocate and provide genuine feedback to the appropriate channels as outlined in the Student Handbook. Students are encouraged to begin with “I feel ...” and “I need...” statements when discussing an issue of concern. Active listening is included in professional communication and requires students to allow space to fully attend to those speaking to them. Our students are expected to be open and receptive to constructive feedback and praise provided by faculty, preceptors, and peers throughout their educational experience in our program. In kind, students are expected to provide constructive feedback and praise as appropriate.

Present – Our students are expected to be present and mindful while engaging in educational experiences within the program. They are to refrain from engaging in distractions during all learning experiences within the program. This includes, but is not limited to, engaging in personal communications while on-site or in class (e.g., phone calls, messages, media, etc.); completing work scheduled for another environment or time; engaging in unrelated or unscheduled tasks/duties/activities; etc. Our students are expected to be focused on the task at-hand while being self-aware and aware of the environment around them.

Motivated – Our students are expected to be internally motivated to continually learn and succeed in the context of their dietetics education. Beyond completing assigned tasks, students are expected to seek more and identify opportunities to develop. Students are expected to be motivated about learning and overcoming obstacles, including discomfort of the unknown and unfamiliar, to grow and learn. They are encouraged to adopt a growth mindset that enables them to become more open to feedback. When feeling overwhelmed, students are expected to self-advocate by requesting help and support.

Adherent – Our students must adhere to all policies and procedures associated with the program (published and referenced in the Student Handbook). Students are expected to adhere to policies and procedures of all facilities and settings included in their learning experiences. Students are expected to be cognizant of their role as a guest in supervised experience sites associated with this program.

Inclusive – Students are expected to support the culture of acceptance and inclusiveness that is foundational to this program. Candidates accepted into this program are diverse in age, gender, background, race/ethnicity, religion/beliefs, cognitions, nationality, appearance, ability, life experience, and other cultural aspects. Students will engage with clients and patients from all walks of life. Students are to act towards others in a transparent, inclusive manner. Students are to refrain from excluding colleagues, faculty members, preceptors, or other pertinent members from educational/professional experiences or information. For example, all program classmates will be included in cohort activities and cohort communications. Students are to use bystander strategies, obtain assistance, and/or act against witnessed discrimination and microaggressions in a respectful, professional manner.

Performance nutrition-focused – Although background in sports/exercise or nutrition/dietetics is not required, an interest in both is paramount to succeeding in this program. Students are expected to demonstrate their intense interest through their willingness to delve into each subject independently (human performance and nutrition) as well as learning about the convergence (performance nutrition). Students are expected to demonstrate their enthusiasm for performance nutrition by seeking and challenging related information and experiences outside of the planned program curriculum. Students are expected to take advantage of human resources within this program (i.e., field experts with a penchant for teaching graduate students) by initiating topical discussions, seeking to learn, and creating a professional network.

Evidence-led – Due to the ubiquitous nature, both fields of nutrition and performance are riddled with self-proclaimed experts and unreliable/invalid claims. The plethora of information available on both subjects increases the risk of misinformation. Well-educated experts in the field allow strong research evidence to lead their practices and communications. These experts also develop evidence by evaluating and pilot-testing ideas that have not been well researched. Students are expected to participate in evidence-based communication and practice within the field. Students are to refrain from presenting or

formally communicating anecdotal or unfounded information as fact. Reliable, evidence-based information is to be the basis of the student's educational experience within this program.

Punctual – Our students are required to be punctual and maintain confirmed schedules. Students must respect the time and efforts of the faculty and preceptors within this program. Being punctual is one way in which they can express that respect. Tardiness will be regarded as disrespectful. If tardiness occurs, students must promptly communicate to their preceptor and/or instructor their anticipation of being late along with their apologies.

Individualized Development Plan (IDP)

All students within the program will work with their advisors to develop and update an Individual Development Plan (IDP) to promote student engagement and ownership of their own development. The IDP includes a self-assessment of professional skills, values, and interests; creation of SMART goals that address professional and skill development; and an ongoing repository of evidence of development. Students will discuss their IDP with their advisors at least once per semester to evaluate their progression toward professional goals. Please see the 'IDP Template for MS/PND Graduate Students' in the appendix. Students may use and refer to external resources such as:

<https://myidp.sciencecareers.org/Home> from the American Association for the Advancement of Science or <https://www.imaginephd.com/> or the CDR Professional Development Portfolio Guide <https://www.cdrnet.org/PDPGuide> to help compose their IDP with their advisor.

The purpose of the IDP is to promote student engagement in their own individual educational experience by providing the opportunity to create and achieve developmental goals that are unique to them and separate from the competency and knowledge-based goals of the program. The IDP promotes equitable treatment of students by empowering them to build upon their own diverse experiences and skill sets while focusing on areas of interest and value to them.

Preceptor's Role and Responsibilities in Supervised Experiences

Above all else, the preceptor is a professional model that engages in open communication and feedback with the student. Each preceptor provides the student with an example of professional practice, application of field-related knowledge and professional judgement. Preceptors are unique and each have their own methods and perspectives. Exposure to many preceptors within the field will allow students to reflect on the similarities and differences of professional practices.

In general, preceptors will:

- orient students to their facility, policies, procedures, and to their job.
- communicate processes (thought, procedural, etc.), guidance, and feedback.
- discuss the associated competencies and performance indicators and translate them into duties/tasks associated with their job.
- teach as they work, by thinking aloud and revealing their critical thinking methods.
- create opportunities for independence by introducing challenging opportunities and encouraging "why" and "how" questions.

Preceptors are selected based on their roles, professional skills, experience, and enthusiasm to teach MS/PND students. All preceptors must be in positions that directly relate to the future and current practices of RDNs. They must engage in activities that are relevant to professional practice in the field of nutrition and dietetics. All preceptors providing medical nutrition therapy must be credentialed RDNs. The policies and procedures for SE sites is available upon request from the program director.

*Students should NOT be used to replace employees during any supervised experience.

Communication Within the Program

Common Communication Platform

The “MS/PND Hub” Blackboard organization is the main mode of program-wide communication between the program director and students within the program. All USC MS/PND students will be added to the organization upon enrollment. Email notifications will be sent to all students for each announcement posted within this organization. Please notify the program director immediately if you suspect that you were not added to this classroom.

The program director and coordinator will post announcements regarding the orientation and workshops, learning activities, program updates, professional organization events, academic seminars, and student-driven events. The program director will also share field-related, funding, and educational opportunities that may be relevant to one or more students within the program. Program-related materials will be stored within the “MS/PND Hub” to ensure all students maintain access throughout their tenure in the program.

Program faculty and staff will make efforts to ensure that the information communicated to students is consistent. The program director is to be notified of any inconsistencies of information, directives, etc.

Communicating Feedback

The USC MS/PND program strives to encourage open, transparent communication amongst all stakeholders to promote a respectful, inclusive environment. Stakeholder feedback is greatly appreciated as it contributes to the continuous improvement of the program. The students are encouraged to provide genuine, constructive feedback that will promote the growth and evolution of the program and all those involved. Only documented feedback will be considered in decision making processes. Informal and verbal conversations must be reiterated in a printable document. Please share feedback documentation with the appropriate recipients listed below.

All feedback will be void of criticism. Criticism, in this context, is defined as global negative feelings or opinions about another’s character or personality. For example, “You’re always so forgetful and flighty.” Criticism leaves little room for resolution or nuance. Unlike criticism, complaints and feedback are actionable and focused on a specific behavior or event. They contain three parts: 1) a feeling; 2) a specific situation; and 3) a need/preference. For example, “I’m disappointed that you forgot our materials yesterday. It makes me feel like you do not value our experience together. I understand that there is a lot to remember. Can we come up with a reminder strategy to prevent this from happening next week?” Another example: “I feel anxious and unprepared as I didn’t have access to the literature that you referred to in class today. I need you to provide the lecture-related information at least three days before class.”

Program Feedback

The program director is the primary recipient of feedback regarding the program. Program feedback may include program requirements, policies/procedures, culture, communications, potential resources, or opportunities, etc. Upon receiving documented feedback (via email or digital document), the program director may survey the program stakeholders to determine the frequency and depth of the sentiment. All survey results (informal and formal) from stakeholders regarding program-level issues will be presented by the program director to the appropriate committee (e.g., Admissions & Curriculum Committee, Retention & Progression Committee, and/or Advisory Board) for further discussion. Resulting decisions and plans will be documented and communicated by the program director.

For example, if a student provides written feedback to the program director that the scheduling of the program orientation was overwhelming and needed to be expanded to two days, the program director would develop a survey regarding the breadth, depth, and duration of the program orientation as well as alternative methods of provision. The program director would share the results with the Retention & Progression Committee and department chair to allow for open input and would use this information to make decisions about the program orientation for the following year. The program director would share the plans to change the orientation with all current students on the MS/PND Hub, with the individual student who submitted the feedback, and in the annual committee and Advisory Board meetings.

Faculty Feedback

Program faculty includes both instructors and advisors that work within the program. Students will have the opportunity to provide anonymous feedback regarding their course instructors at the end of each semester within course evaluations. Instructor evaluations will be made available in the Blackboard classrooms that accompany each course and students will anonymously complete them digitally within the Blackboard platform. Instructor evaluations will be shared with instructors, the program director, and the department chair.

Advisor evaluations will be disseminated to the students via email in the last week of each semester by the program director and the ASPH Director of Evaluations. The program director will also make an advisor evaluation template available on the Blackboard MS/PND classroom. Students are to complete the advisor evaluations after their end-of-semester advising meeting. The feedback on these evaluations is not anonymous and will account for student experiences with their advisor throughout the entire semester. The department chair will receive and manage the program director's advising evaluations.

The program director and department chair will discuss the faculty evaluations and determine actions related to acknowledgement or correction as needed.

Students wishing to communicate feedback about a faculty member outside of the formal evaluation process are encouraged to do so with the faculty member first. For example, if a student feels that an instructor is speaking too quickly during lecture, they may meet with the instructor separately and indicate this issue. The instructor may request assistance from the student to remind them in-class if/when they start to speak too quickly. They may also allow the student to engage in classroom recordings for later reference.

If the feedback is too sensitive, the student may provide the feedback to the program director or department chair. For example, if an instructor consistently cancels class lectures, the student may

bypass the instructor and inform the program director. When in doubt, students should provide feedback to the program director who will direct them in the manner to which they should proceed.

Preceptor Feedback

Students will have the opportunity to provide feedback about their preceptors after each rotation using the preceptor evaluation form. This evaluation is not anonymous, and the information will be shared with the preceptor, program director, and, as needed, department chair.

Students wishing to communicate feedback about a preceptor prior to or outside of the formal evaluation process are encouraged to do so with the program director. Student feedback about preceptors may include information on professionalism, competence/skill level, evidence-based practice, relevance of assigned activities, etc. Students must keep in mind that precepting is a voluntary activity and that the preceptors do not receive any monetary compensation for their time and effort. Additionally, preceptors are future employers, collaborators, and colleagues. Although preceptors receive training in precepting, their pedagogical techniques may vary. Open communication, flexibility, and adaptability are vital components of the student-preceptor relationship. Students are encouraged to self-advocate and provide feedback that will promote a better understanding of the teaching-learning styles.

Student Feedback

Students will receive feedback consistently from advisors, instructors, and preceptors. All instructors and preceptors will provide constructive, positive feedback with each learning assessment that is returned to the student (e.g., reports, projects, papers, etc.). Learning assessment feedback is meant to affirm exceptional performance and provide support to performance that needs improvements. From feedback, students are to learn their strengths and ways to sustain these strengths as well as their needs and ways to address their needs. If applied, students should experience improved performance and continue to progress toward achieving competency. Preceptors will complete a student evaluation at the end of each supervised experience that can be utilized as feedback to the student.

Rights and Responsibilities of the Student

As members of the university community, MS/PND students acquire rights and responsibilities. Expectations of student rights and responsibilities are outlined in the USC Academic Bulletin under Student Rights and Freedoms and Code of Student Conduct:
<https://academicbulletins.sc.edu/union/student-life/>

Every student is responsible for being knowledgeable about the policies and procedures contained in:

1. the USC Policies and Procedures Manual:
https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/provost/policiesandprocedures/universitypolicies/index.php
2. the USC Academic Bulletin website: <https://academicbulletins.sc.edu/policies-regulations/>
3. the Arnold School of Public Health website
4. the USC MS/PND Student Handbook

Changes in policies and procedures will be made available to students and each student shall be responsible for being aware of and abiding by the changes. Students within the MS/PND program have:

1. a right to
 - a sound education.
 - due process
2. a right to and a responsibility for:
 - having a dynamic educational opportunity.
 - having the highest quality instructors and preceptors available.
 - providing input into curriculum planning.
 - achieving self-directed learning.
 - participating in interdisciplinary activities.
 - insuring peer review and self-evaluation.
 - all the rights and privileges of internal governance.
 - organizing and participating in an organization directed toward achieving professional goals.
 - facilitating change in nutrition service delivery through various channels.
 - assembling and exploring fundamental and current professional issues and concerns.
 - organizing in a flexible structure to encompass and represent the diversities within dietetics and be representative of the fundamental and current professional issues and concerns.
 - fostering a better correlation between dietetics education and practice.

Code of Ethics

[The Code of Ethics for the Nutrition and Dietetics Profession](#) was revised and published in 2018. USC MS/PND students have a special concern with ethical standards because of the unique demands of dietetic practice. To guide the students along the path of ethical dietetic practice, the [Code of Ethics](#) are as follows:

1. Competence and professional development in practice (non-maleficence)

Nutrition and dietetics practitioners shall:

- a. Practice using an evidence-based approach within areas of competence, continuously develop and enhance expertise, and recognize limitations.
- b. Demonstrate in depth scientific knowledge of food, human nutrition, and behavior.
- c. Assess the validity and applicability of scientific evidence without personal bias.
- d. Interpret, apply, participate in and/or generate research to enhance practice, innovation, and discovery.
- e. Make evidence-based practice decisions, taking into account the unique values and circumstances of the patient/client and community, in combination with the practitioner's expertise and judgment.
- f. Recognize and exercise professional judgment within the limits of individual qualifications and collaborate with others, seek counsel, and make referrals as appropriate.
- g. Act in a caring and respectful manner, mindful of individual differences, cultural, and ethnic diversity.
- h. Practice within the limits of their scope and collaborate with the inter-professional team.

2. Integrity in personal and organizational behaviors and practices (Autonomy)

Nutrition and dietetics practitioners shall:

- a. Disclose any conflicts of interest, including any financial interests in products or services that are recommended. Refrain from accepting gifts or services which potentially influence or which may give the appearance of influencing professional judgment.

- b. Comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including obtaining/maintaining a state license or certification if engaged in practice governed by nutrition and dietetics statutes.
- c. Maintain and appropriately use credentials.
- d. Respect intellectual property rights, including citation and recognition of the ideas and work of others, regardless of the medium (e.g. written, oral, electronic).
- e. Provide accurate and truthful information in all communications.
- f. Report inappropriate behavior or treatment of a patient/client by another nutrition and dietetics practitioner or other professionals.
- g. Document, code and bill to most accurately reflect the character and extent of delivered services.
- h. Respect patient/client's autonomy. Safeguard patient/client confidentiality according to current regulations and laws.
- i. Implement appropriate measures to protect personal health information using appropriate techniques (e.g., encryption).

3. Professionalism (Beneficence)

Nutrition and dietetics practitioners shall:

- a. Participate in and contribute to decisions that affect the well-being of patients/clients.
- b. Respect the values, rights, knowledge, and skills of colleagues and other professionals.
- c. Demonstrate respect, constructive dialogue, civility and professionalism in all communications, including social media.
- d. Refrain from communicating false, fraudulent, deceptive, misleading, disparaging or unfair statements or claims.
- e. Uphold professional boundaries and refrain from romantic relationships with any patients/clients, surrogates, supervisees, or students.
- f. Refrain from verbal/physical/emotional/sexual harassment.
- g. Provide objective evaluations of performance for employees, coworkers, and students and candidates for employment, professional association memberships, awards, or scholarships, making all reasonable efforts to avoid bias in the professional evaluation of others.
- h. Communicate at an appropriate level to promote health literacy.
- i. Contribute to the advancement and competence of others, including colleagues, students, and the public.

4. Social responsibility for local, regional, national, global nutrition and well-being (Justice)

Nutrition and dietetics practitioners shall:

- a. Collaborate with others to reduce health disparities and protect human rights.
- b. Promote fairness and objectivity with fair and equitable treatment.
- c. Contribute time and expertise to activities that promote respect, integrity, and competence of the profession.
- d. Promote the unique role of nutrition and dietetics practitioners.
- e. Engage in service that benefits the community and to enhance the public's trust in the profession.
- f. Seek leadership opportunities in professional, community, and service organizations to enhance health and nutritional status while protecting the public.

MS/PND Program Policies and Procedures

Equitable Treatment

The USC MS/PND program aims to provide guidance to enable the students to fully benefit from their education and maximize their potential within and beyond the program. The program policies and procedures articulated in this Student Handbook seek to protect graduate students and create opportunities for their empowerment and participation in this program.

There are four categorical dimensions that are embedded within the practices of the USC MS/PND program to ensure equitable treatment of our students. The four dimensions include: 1) Support for graduate students; 2) Policies and Procedures; 3) Professional Socialization; and 4) Social Responsiveness. These were adapted from the *Dimensions of Equitable and Respectful Practices*¹ published by the American Psychological Association.

Support for Graduate Students

The faculty and preceptors of the USC MS/PND program strive to promote professional resources and support to protect and encourage student wellness. Transparent communication about the requirements, commitments, potential stressors, and available resources and support is a keystone aim of the USC MS/PND program. The MS/PND aims to proactively prepare applicants and students with resourceful information to promote access and inclusion. The publication and discussion of this information on the University website, program webpage, Student Handbook, and advising sessions increase applicant/student awareness and access to the known resources and support.

Policies and Procedures

The MS/PND program policies and procedures published in this Student Handbook are designed to be transparent, fair, and consistent. All students are encouraged to be members of the MS/PND Advisory Board to ensure that students are involved in the process of creating and revising policies for the program. The program will strive to address problematic policies as they become evident and are brought to the attention of the Advisory Board. Transparency of policies, procedures, requirements, evaluation criteria, deadlines, schedules, and costs are of utmost importance and will be updated within the Student Handbook as necessary. Students' educational rights including privacy, protection from exploitation, grievance procedures, evaluation/feedback procedures, and more are included in this Student Handbook.

Professional Socialization

Equity and inclusion involve delivering opportunities for socialization within the profession by providing educational activities, training, and mentorship related to professionalism. Students will receive direct training in professional engagement. All supervised learning experiences are guided by professionals (a.k.a. preceptors) across research, performance nutrition, nutrition therapy, community nutrition, and food systems management facets of the dietetics profession. Students will engage in advocacy training across multiple systemic levels. To ensure that students are exposed to professionalism that is responsive to cultural and contextual differences, students will be guided through the development and progress evaluation of their own Individualized Development Plans (IDP) by their faculty advisor. Students will receive regular feedback on their progress towards achieving their professional goals identified in the IDP.

Social Responsiveness

The USC MS/PND program strives to foster critical awareness and culturally responsive practice of dietetics by training the students to develop the capacity for critical thinking in a wide variety of contextual applications. The program director will consistently call upon the Retention & Progression Committee, faculty, preceptors, and students to continuously evaluate the alignment of program practices and policies with its cultural values. The program curriculum provides opportunities for students to gain a greater understanding of the relationship between personal and professional values while the program faculty strive to create a culture of advocacy for equity and inclusion.

¹American Psychological Association, APAGS-BEA Work Group. (2023). *Equitable and Respectful Treatment of Students in Graduate Psychology Programs*. Retrieved from <https://www.apa.org/about/policy/guidelines-equitable-treatment-students.pdf>.

Advising

All students will be assigned a full-time faculty member within the program who will serve as their advisor. Each student will meet with their advisor a minimum of two times per semester to discuss Individual Development Plan (IDP), course and SE schedule, student progress, and student experience within the program. These meetings are designed to allow the student to obtain clarifications, address any issues or conflicts within the program, discuss educational goals, reflect on academic performance, and obtain professional guidance.

The program policies will be enforced. This includes fulfillment of the course prerequisites and program requirements. The program director determines the appropriateness of any exceptions. Students should not approach their advisor about exceptions to these policies and requirements unless the program director is the advisor.

Topics to discuss with your MS/PND program advisor:

Students are encouraged to contact/meet with their advisor to discuss the MS/PND program, MS/PND courses, MS/PND supervised experiences, MS/PND workshops, Individual Development Plans, resources, support services, student activities, and professional activities.

Topics to discuss with other University advisors:

- Students are to direct personal, emotional, and/or psychological issues/concerns to the USC Counseling & Psychiatry Department (https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student-health-well-being/mental-health/counseling-and-psychiatry/index.php).
- Other student health and wellness issues/concerns should be directed to the USC Student Health and Well-Being Services (https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/health_services/index.php).
- Questions and concerns about financial aid, tuition, and fees must be directed to the Financial Aid & Scholarships Office (https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/financial_aid/)

The MS/PND faculty advisors are not qualified to provide these services. Please see the course bulletin and university website for more information.

USC MS/PND advisors are mandatory reporters. They are required, by law, to report any observation or discussion indicating a threat to the students, the faculty, the staff, or any other aspect of the

University. **You do not need to ask for help before your advisor reports any conversation, email, or rumor to be investigated by the University.**

Current advisors are:

Devon Golem, PhD, RD, LDN– Interim Program Director

Master's Program of Study (M-POS)

All master's students at University of South Carolina must have a completed and approved Master's Program of Study ([M-POS](#)) form on file within 12 months of initial enrollment in the program.

Grades

Each course syllabus contains specific information about course grading procedures. The letter grades are assigned to quality level as follows: A=excellent, B=good, C=fair, D=poor, and F=failing. A plus (+) may be applied to the B, C, and D letter grades. The [USC Graduate School grading policies](#) indicate that courses graded D+ or lower cannot be applied to graduate degree programs. It is the policy of the USC MS/PND program that students earn a C or better in all coursework. Students who earn lower than a C in a MS/PND course must retake the course for a better grade with the approval of the program director.

"3.00 Rule" - Graduate degree-seeking students whose cumulative grade point average (GPA) drops below 3.00 (B) will be placed on academic probation by the USC Graduate School and are allowed one calendar year in which to raise the GPA to at least a 3.0. In the cases of incomplete "I" status grades that cause a cumulative GPA to drop below 3.00, a graduate degree-seeking student will be placed on academic probation at the end of the semester in which the grade is posted. If the cumulative GPA remains below a 3.00 once the incomplete is converted to a grade, they will be granted only one major semester of probation dating from the semester in which the grade is received by the registrar. Students who do not reach a cumulative GPA of 3.00 during the probationary period will not be permitted to enroll for further graduate course work as a degree or non-degree seeking student.

Pass-Fail grading (S=satisfactory or U=unsatisfactory) may be applied to a course outside the content of the USC MS/PND program course requirements for students wishing to take courses beyond program requirements. Students must obtain the approval of their advisor, the program director, and the dean of the Graduate School prior to registration. Courses completed with a "S" grade may be counted toward total credit hours earned. The grade of "U" will be calculated into the cumulative GPA as a grade of "F". Please review the [USC Graduate School Academic Regulations](#) for more information.

Students who wish to appeal a grade are advised to utilize the student grievance procedure outlined in the [Student Grievance, Appeals, and Petitions](#) policies and procedures maintained by the USC Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support.

Progression

To prepare students for success, the USC MS/PND program has been developed as a cohesive set of courses and experiences enabling progressive learning. This means that opportunities to gain knowledge are provided prior to opportunities to apply knowledge. Students will be assessed on their knowledge before they are assessed on their ability to demonstrate application of that knowledge. For example,

students must learn the basics of Medical Nutrition Therapy before gaining experience in an intensive care unit.

Students are to register for the courses in the order that they are presented on the road map with little or no deviation approved by the program director. The capstone course should be completed in the last semester prior to graduation.

Students are to accumulate learning skills and content information in a progressive fashion.

For example, nutrition assessment skills are introduced for age-related public nutrition concerns in the first semester in PNDI 620 Nutrition Through the Life Cycle. More advanced nutrition assessment skills are introduced in a very detailed manner in PNDI 710 Medical Nutrition Therapy I while students complete hands-on activities of each major category of nutrition assessment. These skills are called upon when learning about more complex nutrition-related conditions and scenarios in PNDI 740 Medical Nutrition Therapy II, PNDI 750 Performance Nutrition Therapy, as well as PNDI 714 and 715 PND SE Levels 4 and 5.

The roadmap serves as a guide for completing the program of study. Slight deviations are anticipated. Students are to devise a personalized program roadmap with their advisor and use it as a guide along with the program of study in the USC Academic Bulletin to determine their progression through the program.

Qualifying Exams

Common feedback from clinical preceptors across the nation includes the need to ensure all students have the necessary knowledge required to engage in nutrition therapy experiences. Like most RDN programs, the MS/PND program curriculum is designed to provide opportunities to learn all necessary nutrition therapy information. Additionally, two qualifying exams are included in the program curriculum as learning assessment gateways to ensure students have learned the theoretical knowledge and skills that will be applied in nutrition therapy supervised experiences. The MNT courses, nutrition skills workshops, and qualifying exams are collaborative learning experiences that promote progressive learning and student success.

The qualifying exams will be scheduled and administered by the program director within the semester mentioned on the road maps. Students will be able to sit for each qualifying exam after the required prerequisites have been completed. For example, students will sit for Qualifying Exam 1 after they have completed the MNT I course and the Nutrition Skills Workshop 1. Students need to earn a passing grade (70% or higher) on each section within the qualifying exams to engage in the related supervised experiences (Qualifying Exam 1 prior to nutrition therapy rotations in PNDI 714 PND SE Level 4 and Qualifying Exam 2 prior to nutrition therapy rotations in PNDI 715 PND SE Level 5). If students do not earn a passing grade, the program director and student will devise a remediation plan that must be completed prior to retaking the exam prior to the scheduled supervised experience. The supervised experience rotation schedule may be rearranged to allow students the time they require to complete remediation and gain the knowledge and skills needed to pass the qualifying exam.

Student Performance Monitoring

Student learning assessment will occur through evaluation of student performance on learning assessments throughout the curriculum. To ensure student success within the program, student performance monitoring will occur on an ongoing basis via academic performance tracking (i.e., grades) and competency tracking. Program faculty, preceptors, and the students will work together to monitor student performance and identify strengths and needs.

Student performance will be monitored a minimum of twice per semester with midterm and final evaluations from each course and SE. Instructors, preceptors, advisors, and the program director will be involved in a network of communication regarding student performance. Instructors and preceptors are to identify lower than expected student performance at any point during their teaching experience with a particular student. Once identified, the lower-than-expected student performance will be documented (refer to the Performance Progression Alert document in the appendix).

A Performance Progression Alert (PPA) will be initiated, by program faculty, for any students who are not performing to academic and/or professional standards at any point in the program of study. Academic standards include maintaining a minimum of a 3.0 on a 4.0 GPA scale in all required courses, progressing toward achievement of competencies and performance indicators, and maintaining regular attendance. Professional standards entail following the student code of conduct outlined in the Student Handbook as well as the Dietetic Professional's Code of Ethics. If identified by a preceptor, the program coordinator will initiate the PPA documentation.

The Retention & Progression Committee will review all PPAs on an ad hoc basis and assist the program director in completing the remediation section. The PPA will specify the nature of the performance concern, the criteria for expected performance, the timeline for achieving expected improvements, remediation strategies, and consequences for failure to improve performance. Once completed, the PPA will be signed by the issuing authority (instructor, program director, or advisor), the student, and the program director. Copies will be distributed to each of the signatories while the original will be kept in the student's academic file. Communication regarding the notice will be submitted by the Program Director to the signatories, the student's advisor, Department Chair, and the Retention & Progression Committee.

Deficiencies in student performance will be categorized as minor or major based on the severity of the event. Major deficiencies will result in immediate notification to the chair of the department and include unsafe, unethical, and/or disrespectful behaviors. Examples of minor deficiencies include unexcused absences, lack of performance (e.g., not engaging in learning activities or assessments), below expected performance on three or more learning activities, identified knowledge gap, etc.

Students and their advisors will monitor their progress achieving the student-derived goals within the Individual Development Plan (IDP) on a bi-semester basis (mid and end of semester). Each year, the student will revise the IDP to acknowledge development of professional skills as well as update or create new goals to promote continuous professional development. (Please see the Individual Development Plan section in this Student Handbook for more information.)

Student Remediation and Retention

Remediation strategies will be identified by the program director in conjunction with the Retention & Progression Committee and recorded in the Performance Progression Alert. These strategies may include additional learning activities and/or assessments, remedial instruction, tutorial support, and utilization of additional resources. The specific remediation strategies selected will account for multiple factors including student needs, available resources, IDP, etc.

Consequences for failure to improve performance of minor deficiencies may include repeating learning activities and/or assessments, retaking courses, extending supervised experiences, etc. Consequences for major deficiencies will be determined by the Retention & Progression Committee, Program Director, and Department Chair and may include dismissal from the program.

Motivation and self-advocacy are key components of student retention. Identifying and addressing student needs are joint responsibilities of the program faculty, preceptors, and students. Students are expected to join efforts with program faculty and preceptors to identify and engage in opportunities to maintain motivation and promote success. Self-advocacy skills will be encouraged by program advisors in their meetings with their assigned program students. Students will be encouraged to discuss their level of challenge within the program to proactively identify feelings of overwhelm and need for assistance/resources/accommodations and/or feelings of underwhelm and need for additional challenges and learning opportunities. The program advisors will help devise individual learning plans to assist the student in addressing these concerns. The program advisors will document and communicate this information with the program director who will incorporate this feedback into the program evaluation process. Please refer to the [USC Graduate School Academic Regulations](#) for more information about academic suspensions, reinstatement after suspension, academic forgiveness, academic exception petitions, appeal of academic decisions, and more.

Disciplinary/Termination Procedures

Minor and major deficiencies in student performance will be addressed with a PPA as detailed above in the 'Student Remediation and Retention' section. As necessary, suspension or termination may be the consequence of major deficiencies as determined by the Retention & Progression Committee, program director, and department chair. Approval from the dean of the Graduate School will be required to enact any disciplinary action decision.

Leave of Absence

Students may need to take a leave of absence from the USC MS/PND program for unforeseen circumstances. The student, advisor, and program director will determine the appropriate plan of action based on the considerations relevant to the circumstance. Please refer to the [USC Graduate School Academic Regulations](#) for more information about attendance, revalidation of out-of-date courses, retroactive graduate credit, dropping a course, withdrawal from all courses, and financial obligations to the university. Please note the maximum timeframe for completing a master's degree (six years as of 2024-2025 Academic Bulletin) in the first page of the [Graduate Academic Regulations](#).

Prior Learning/Transferring Credits

Course work transferred from another institution must be “relevant to the program and have course content and a level of instruction equivalent to that offered by the University’s own graduate program”. The program director will consider coursework from ACEND-accredited programs (graduate level is preferred). MS/PND students wishing to transfer credit to fulfill program requirements must obtain the approval from the program director and dean of the Graduate School. For more information on the associated regulations, please visit the [USC Graduate School Academic Regulations](#) website.

Students accepted into the USC MS/PND program may transfer credit for nutrition-related courses only from other ACEND-accredited programs with approval from the program director.

Withdrawal from the Program

Students wishing to withdraw from the MS/PND program are encouraged to seek guidance from their advisor and program director. Students wishing to withdraw from the program must provide a written request indicating the applicable dates, explaining the reason, and awareness of ramifications with respect to grades assigned, program status, liability for repayment of student loans, and financial obligations to the University. Please see the [USC Graduate School Academic Regulations](#) website for more information about withdrawal from all courses and financial obligations to the University. If the withdrawal occurs within the scheduled refund period, the student can expect to receive a refund, minus any financial obligations to the University, in approximately 4-6 weeks. Please see the “Financial Obligations to the University” section in the USC Graduate School Academic Regulations website.

Policy on Professionalism

I. Conduct

Students of the USC MS/PND Program must conduct themselves in a respectful, professional manner. This includes the following behaviors/aspects:

- a. Address preceptors, educators, and other professionals formally by their last name unless otherwise instructed by the individual. (Ex. Dr., Professor, Mr., Ms., etc.).
- b. Be flexible and adaptable when unexpected changes occur. Respond in a positive manner.
- c. Follow the policies and procedures of all facilities in which you visit/attend.
- d. Arrive at least 15 minutes early to all scheduled experiences to demonstrate your eagerness to learn.
- e. Contact all preceptors at their place of work/facility prior to the start of the experience.
- f. Inform the preceptor and program director if you will be late or miss time with a preceptor.
 - i. A pattern of (3 or more) unexcused absence from or tardiness to a supervised experience rotation will result in a meeting with your advisor and/or the program director. Additional unexcused absences or tardiness may result in dismissal from the program.

- g. Obtain permission from the preceptor to leave assigned facility during the scheduled supervised learning experience. You must always “check-in” and “check-out” with your preceptor each day.
- h. The student is responsible for:
 - i. transportation to and from each facility. Do not accept transportation from preceptors, USC faculty members, patients, clients, or unsafe individuals.
 - ii. their own meals.
 - iii. their own healthcare and healthcare costs.
 - iv. following policies and procedures related to accidental injury during supervised learning experiences. Students are not covered by worker’s compensation as they are not employees of USC or the affiliated facilities.
 - v. obtaining any immunizations, physical exams, drug screenings, background checks, and the associated fees required by the facilities.

II. Dress Code

Students of the USC MS/PND Program must dress in professionally appropriate attire for all supervised experiences. The purpose of professional attire is to visually demonstrate the message of competence and reliability. Inappropriate attire attracts unprofessional attention.

Preceptors will share any specific dress code requirements associated with their work/facility. Otherwise, the following dress code shall be applied.

- a. Full-length casual dress pants must be hemmed. No denim/jeans, fraying, holes, distressed, whitewashed pants or pants that do not fit. Pants must cover all parts of the buttocks, lower abdomen, and legs.
- b. Dresses and skirts must be at least knee length. No miniskirts. No fraying or holes.
- c. The use of shorts must be approved by the preceptor. The length of shorts must be a minimum of midthigh and cover upper thighs, buttocks, and lower abdomen and hips.
- d. Shirts, blouses, and tops must cover the chest, midsection, lower back, and tops of shoulders. The neckline of tops should be designed to cover the xiphoid process and body of the sternum and should not expose skin below the sternum manubrium. No midriffs, no visible bra/bra straps, no visible cleavage, no visible chest and/or underarm hair should be exposed. No branding/slogans on clothing or clothing accessories unless associated with the facility/worksites and approved by the preceptor.
- e. Closed-toe walking shoes with non-slip soles must be worn at all facilities. The appropriate use of sneakers, running shoes, or tennis shoes must be approved by the preceptor. No stilettos, no sandals, no clogs, no slippers. Ask preceptor for clarification.
- f. Appropriate undergarments must be worn but not seen.
- g. Athleisure wear and workout clothing may only be worn as appropriate during physical activities or exercise and after approval/directives from preceptor. All previous clothing policies apply to athleisure wear (e.g., sleeves, no cleavage, midthigh shorts, coverage of hips and buttocks, underwear hidden, etc.)
- h. Limit jewelry to ensure safety. Dangling and large jewelry are safety hazards and should not be worn unless permitted by preceptor. Minimize the size of facial and ear

piercings. Body piercings should not be visible or revealed. (Body piercings are personal, not professional...do not discuss or reveal in professional settings.)

- i. Natural, unpolished, trimmed fingernails are required. No faux nails, no nail polish, no longer than 1 cm. Clean nails with no visible signs of particulates.
- j. When wearing skirts/dresses, hose could be worn if neutral, white, or black...no brightly colored legs unless approved by preceptor.

III. Professional Code of Ethics – See “Code of Ethics” section above

Protection of Privacy of Information

Student's privacy of information is protected in accordance with the specifications of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 as described in the [University Registrar](#) website.

FERPA gives student rights with respect to their education records that include: 1) access to their educational records; 2) the right to correct inaccurate or misleading information in these records; and 3) limit the release of information to third parties (as exemplified below with directory information).

The following information has been designated as **Directory Information**, which is subject to release to the public under the Buckley Amendment (PL 93-380), "The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974": Student's name, dates of attendance, campus, college or school, classification, primary program of study, full-time or part-time status, degree(s) awarded including dates, honors or awards including Dean's and President's list, University email address and a student's permanent address (city, state, and zip code).

The *student may revoke permission* to release the above information by submitting a written request to the Office of the University Registrar for a “Confidentiality Indicator” to be placed on their academic record which prevents the disclosure of Directory Information.

The student may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures of University of South Carolina to comply with the requirements of FERPA by contacting the Family Policy Compliance Office at the following address:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC, 20202-4605

Student Academic Files

Student performance and advising files are maintained in the MS/PND program by the program director. Faculty and program staff are the only personnel who have access to these files. Application documentation, learning assessments, competency tracking documents, performance evaluations, and advising materials are stored in the student academic file. Students may request to view their own file in the presence of the program director, faculty member, or college administrator.

Students may request the following files from the corresponding offices:

Copy of graduate admissions file – The Graduate School (Document Copy Request form)

Transcript or Certified Copy of Grade Report – University Registrar (AS-25 Transcript Request form)

Equal Opportunity

The MS/PND program at USC operates in strict accordance with Title VI, Title IX, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the American Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Refer to the Office of Civil Rights & Title IX at the following website:

https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/civil_rights_title_ix/index.php

We provide equal educational and employment opportunities for all persons without regard to race, ethnicity, national or ethnic origin, marital status, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, or veteran's status. In addition to these universal factors, we at the MS/PND program provide an inclusive environment with equal opportunities for all persons regardless of physical appearance, anthropometrics, physical performance ability, athletic background, fitness status, health status, and neurocognitive variations.

Students with concerns or complaints regarding the University's compliance with the equal opportunity laws should contact the Office of Civil Rights & Title IX at 803-777-3854, civilrights@mailboxsc.edu, or by using the link above to report an incident. If the concern or complaint has not been satisfactorily addressed, the student may also refer to the [SC Commission on Higher Education Complaints](#) form and the [Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Complaint Policy](#) per indicated on the Office of the Provost 'Complaint Policies' webpage.

https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/provost/academicpriorities/academicprograms/state-authorization/complaint-policies.php

Grievance Procedure/Filing a Complaint

All students in the USC community have the right to express a grievance if they feel that they have been treated in a manner not consistent with the community standards at the university. There are several types of grievances including:

- Non-academic grievance – a complaint by a student about an alleged action by a university employee which adversely affects their status, rights or privileges.
- Grievances related to discrimination and harassment (referred to the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs).
- Petition request waiver of or exception to school, department, or program regulations and/or requirements.
- Appeal requests to reverse or modify a decision made at a lower level of authority (e.g., program suspension or dismissal).

For more information, please visit Student Grievances, Appeals and Petitions publication on [My Arnold School](#) website.

Grievance Procedure within ASPH

MS/PND students who wish to submit a grievance, petition, or appeal within the Arnold School of Public Health should first seek resolution with the faculty or staff member in question and the program director. Students must ensure documentation of the grievance and its receipt by the intended recipient (email is valid documentation). If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved, the student may pursue the matter further with the following chain of command in a step-by-step process:

1. **Course instructor or preceptor** (if the issue is course or experience related)
2. **MS/PND Program Director** (for course, program, and professional grievances)
3. Chair of the Department of Exercise Science
4. Arnold School Office of Faculty Affairs and Curriculum (designated associate dean)
5. Office of Faculty Affairs and Curriculum to be heard by the Scholastic Standards and Petitions Committee

The course instructor and/or the MS/PND program director are the first two staff members for all grievance reports. They should only be skipped if you are not comfortable reporting to them. For grievances related to the MS/PND program, students should report to the MS/PND program director and/or the department chair. The program director will share all reported grievances to the department chair, and they will determine a resolution. The program director will maintain the records of student complaint including the resolution plans for a period of seven years.

The Office of Student Advocacy is available to support students through the grievance process as needed. Please refer to The [Office of Student Advocacy](#) services section on the USC [Student Affairs and Academic Support](#) webpage.

If the a program-related grievance is not resolved, students should file a complaint to the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) by following the instructions on the ACEND website: <https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend> under the “[Students and Advancing Education](#)” page at ‘[Filing a Complaint](#)’

ACEND, 120 Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000, Chicago, IL 60606-6995
Phone: (312) 899-0040 (ext. 5400)
Email: acend@eatright.org

USC Graduate School Policies and Regulations

In addition to the USC MS/PND program policies and procedures, all graduate students must comply with the policies and regulations put forth by the Graduate School of USC. For more information, please visit:

Graduate Academic Regulations: <https://academicbulletins.sc.edu/graduate/policies-regulations/graduate-academic-regulations/>

Graduate School Forms Library:

https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/graduate_school/forms_library/index.php

Student Support Services & Resources

Students in the MS/PND program have access to a myriad of support services at the University of South Carolina. These include health services, counseling, financial aid, and many more. Students are advised to determine and request necessary accommodations that they may need to ensure they are treated in an equitable manner.

USC Graduate School Opportunities and Support

The USC Graduate School: Opportunities and Support webpage provides easy access to the multitude of resources available to all USC graduate students. For more information visit the following website: (https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/graduate_school/opportunities_support/index.php)

Graduate Student Resources Hub

The Graduate Student Resources Hub is located on the 2nd floor of the Close-Hipp building, Rm 204. The Career Center's Manager for Graduate Advising and the National Fellowships Coordinator have offices within the Hub. For more information, visit:

https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/graduate_school/opportunities_support/the_grad_hub/index.php

Campus Recreation

Campus Recreation has several facilities including The Strom Thurmond Wellness & Fitness Center; the Solomon Blatt Physical Education Center; the Nicros A.R.T. climbing wall; the Outdoor Recreation Hub; and swimming pools. Campus Recreation offers a variety of recreational services to all USC students which include intramural sports, personal training, adventure trips, sport clubs, and more. For more information, please visit: https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/campus_recreation/

Career Center

The USC Career Center provides advisors and resources to help students develop their careers. For more information, visit: https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/career_center/index.php

Carolina Food Co.

Carolina Food Co. offers meal plans and on-campus dining for convenience and flexibility. For more information, visit: https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/dining_services/

Gamecock CommUnity Shop

The USC Gamecock CommUnity Shop (a.k.a. Unity Shop) is a one-stop shop that provides food, clothing, toiletries, cleaning supplies, school supplies, and home goods to students on a budget. All students with a valid CarolinaCard are welcome to shop using 40-point monthly budget. Most items are valued at 1-point and clothing (business and casual) does not count toward point budget. For more information, visit: https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_affairs/our_initiatives/health_and_well-being/gamecock_community_shop/index.php

Graduate Student Association

The Graduate Student Association is student-led student group dedicated to the advancement and development of graduate and professional students at USC. For more information, visit:

https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/leadership_and_service_center/student_organization/s/graduate_student_association/index.php

Black Graduate Student Association

The USC Black Graduate Student Association fosters an environment for and serves as an aid in advocating the needs and concerns of black graduate students at USC. For more information, visit: <https://garnetgate.sa.sc.edu/organization/BGSA>

Pan-African Student Association

The Pan-African Student Association (PANASA) is an organization for Africans and friends of Africa (which includes members from African countries, America and international students from other continents). PANASA hosts activities that encourage a community for African students to share their culture with other students. For more information, please visit: <https://garnetgate.sa.sc.edu/organization/panasa>

International Student and Scholar Support

International Student and Scholar Support offers support, advising, and programming for international students studying at USC. For more information, visit: https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/international_student_and_scholar_support/index.php

Leadership and Service Center

The USC Leadership and Service Center is a resource that encourages students to positively impact their communities through involvement in student organizations, leadership development, community service, and civic engagement. Learn more about the opportunities to be a leader in the community by visiting: https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/leadership_and_service_center/index.php

Multicultural Student Affairs

The Office of Multicultural Student Affairs works to support students of marginalized communities with advocacy services, awareness and comprehension of diversity issues through programs, events, and trainings; and assists the campus community to expand their efforts to cultivate an inclusive community at the University. For more information, visit: https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/multicultural_student_affairs/index.php

National Fellowships and Scholar Programs (for Graduate Students)

The National Fellowships and Scholar Programs can help graduate students find external funding for graduate school, research, and other opportunities. Students can receive personal advising and feedback on proposal drafts. For more information, visit: https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/fellowships_and_scholar_programs/national_fellowships/graduate_students/index.php

Off-Campus Housing Services

The Off-Campus Living & Neighborhood Relations office assists students looking for housing options in Columbia. For more information, visit:

https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/off_campus_living_and_neighborhood_relations/index.php

Opportunities Board

The Graduate School Opportunities Board is a platform to learn about events, fellowships, job postings, and other opportunities for graduate students. For more information, visit:

https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/graduate_school/opportunities_support/opportunities_bulletin_board/index.php

SHARPGrads Program

The SHARPGrads program is a free workshop series that provides training in digital scholarship, computing, and library research concepts for graduate students. To learn more about the program, please visit:

https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/university_libraries/get_research_help/sharpgrads/index.php

SPARC Graduate Research Grant Program

The Office of the Vice President for Research sponsors a merit-based award of up to \$5000 designed to promote research and creative excellence across all disciplines at USC. For more information, please visit:

https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/research/internal_funding_awards/students/sparc/index.php

Student Affairs and Academic Support

Student Affairs and Academic Support works to create an optimal learning environment that supports students, faculty, and staff. The Student Success Center services include tutoring, peer writing, and online resources. Learn more about each of the services within this list. See the resources available at the website: <https://www.sc.edu/experience/academic-support/index.php>

Student Advocacy

The Office of Student Advocacy helps students resolve university-related problems or issues in an informal way. This office is the first place for students to go when they are unsure of whom they should ask or what they should do about a given issue whether it is certifying an excused absence or if they feel they have been treated unfairly by faculty or staff members.

https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_affairs/our_initiatives/academic_success/ombuds_services/our_services/index.php

Student Disability Resource Center

The Student Disability Resource Center coordinates efforts to ensure that students with disabilities receive reasonable accommodations. For more information, visit:

https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_disability_resource_center/index.php

Student Financial Aid and Scholarships

The Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships provides assistance to all students in securing funding and financial aid. For more information, visit:

https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/financial_aid/index.php

Student Health Insurance Information

Learn more about student health insurance information and requirements at the University Health Services website: https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student-health-well-being/insurance-fees/index.php

Student Health & Well-Being Center

Student Health & Well-Being includes medical (including nutrition), mental health (counseling & psychiatry), and wellness services (e.g., Healthy Campus Initiatives, bystander intervention training, sexual health, etc.) For more information, visit:

https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student-health-well-being/index.php

Student Legal Services

USC students can request legal support and services in matters that related to landlords, tenants, housing, and domestic relations. Visit the Student Legal Services website for more information:

https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/off_campus_living_and_neighborhood_relations/request-legal-help/index.php

Student Life

The Department of Student Life serves as a resource for student involvement through experiences, services, and facilities. For more information, visit:

https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_affairs/our_experts/our_offices/student_life/index.php

Sustainability

The Office of Sustainability works to create an equitable, healthy and sustainable campus through efforts such as the Sustainable Carolina Garden, the Green Certification Program, and more. Learn

about sustainability efforts across campus and ways to get involved. For more information, visit:
https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/sustainability/index.php

University Libraries

With study spaces, online support, and a DataLab, the USC libraries are much more than a book depository. A dedicated space for graduate students is located on Level 5 in Thomas Cooper Library. For more information, review the Graduate Student Guide to USC Libraries at
<https://guides.library.sc.edu/graduate/libraryspaces>

USC Police Department (Law Enforcement and Safety)

The USCPD works around the clock to ensure the campus is a safe, secure environment. For more information or assistance, please visit:
https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/law_enforcement_and_safety/index.php

Veterans and Military Services

The Veteran and Military Services team helps students navigate the experience of balancing student and service life. The office can assist with benefit requirements, address questions, and provide information about veteran/military student resources. For more information, please visit:
https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/veterans_and_military_services/

Writing Center

The USC Writing Center is a resource to improve academic writing skills and engage in collaborative learning. For more information, please visit:
https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/artsandsciences/english_language_and_literature/beyond_classroom/writing_center/index.php

Becoming a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist

The dietetics educational infrastructure has evolved to provide two main pathways to becoming an RDN: the Future Education Model Pathway and the Traditional Pathway. Both require 1) completing didactic and supervised experiential educational requirements in ACEND-accredited dietetic programs; 2) passing a national registration exam; and 3) fulfilling state licensing requirements. The pathways differ in the way educational requirements are obtained.

Future Education Model Pathway (applies to the USC MS/PND program)

There are three requirements to become an RDN following ACEND's *Future Education Model Standards*. Successful completion of the USC MS/PND program will fulfill the first requirement.

1. **Complete an ACEND-accredited graduate program.** This entails completion of didactic, supervised learning experiences, and competency assessments required by the program as evidenced by earning a graduate degree and a verification statement.
2. **Pass the national RDN credentialing exam.** The Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) provides a national exam at various testing centers throughout the nation.
3. **Gain licensure in your state of practice, if applicable.** Obtaining a license to practice as an RDN is determined on a state-by-state basis. Licensing is required in the state of South Carolina as well as the bordering states of North Carolina and Georgia. To learn more about licensure requirements in the U.S., please visit the following links: <https://www.cdrnet.org/licensure> and <https://www.eatrightpro.org/advocacy/licensure/licensure-map-and-statutes-by-state>. To learn more about licensure in SC, please visit the South Carolina Labor Licensing Regulation website: <https://www.llr.sc.gov/diet/>.

FYI: Traditional Pathway

For students enrolled in programs that follow the 2022 ACEND Standards, there are four main requirements to become an RDN. These requirements are provided for reference only and do not apply to USC MS/PND students (who will complete the first three steps in the MS/PND program).

1. **Master's Degree:** Completion of a minimum of a master's degree.
2. **DPD Verification Statement:** Completion of Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) requirements in an ACEND-accredited DPD as evidenced by a DPD verification statement.
3. **SP Verification Statement:** Completion of an ACEND-accredited supervised practice program as evidenced by an SP verification statement.
4. **Pass the national RDN Credentialing Exam.** The Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) provides a national exam at various testing centers throughout the nation.
5. **Gain licensure in your state, if applicable.** <https://www.cdrnet.org/state-licensure>

For more information, please visit the Commission on Dietetic Registration website <https://www.cdrnet.org/RDN> and the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics website <https://www.eatright.org/become-an-rdn-or-ndtr>.

Maintenance of RDN Credential

Registered Dietitian Nutritionists must maintain competency and stay up to date on new information related to their practice. To that, they must complete continuing professional education. The CDR monitors the continuing education of professionals in the field by requiring RDNs to earn 75 Continuing Professional Education Units (CPEUs) every 5 years.

Professional Development Portfolio (PDP)

The CDR constructed the PDP process which is a tool to ensure continuous learning to support professional competence. This is an automated tool which guides you in selecting areas of focus and logging CPEUs earned from approved educational sources. See the following link to learn more:

<https://www.cdrnet.org/PDPGuide>.

Professional Organizations in Nutrition and Dietetics

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND or 'the Academy') <https://www.eatright.org/>

Included in the AND membership are state and regional affiliate memberships:

South Carolina Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (SCAND) <https://www.eatrightsc.org/>

Columbia Midlands Dietetics Association (CMDA) <https://www.eatrightsc.org/columbia-midlands>

Memberships in Dietetic Practice Groups (DPGs) and Member Interest Groups (MIGs) are available to all AND members for additional purchase and registration. Below refer to the lists of related DPGs and related MIGs below. Please see <https://www.eatrightpro.org/career/academy-groups/dietetic-practice-groups> and <https://www.eatrightpro.org/career/academy-groups/member-interest-groups> for more comprehensive information.

Dietetic Practice Groups (DPGs) of the Academy

Related DPGs

Sports and Human Performance Nutrition (SHPN) <https://www.shpndpg.org/home>

Behavioral Health Nutrition (BHN) <https://www.bhndpg.org/home>

Cardiovascular Health and Wellbeing (CVW) <https://www.cvwell.org/home>

Dietitians in Business and Communication (DBC) <https://www.dbconline.org/home>

Dietitians in Integrative Health and Functional Medicine (DIFM) <https://integrativerd.org/home>

Healthy Aging <https://www.hadpg.org/>

Nutrition Education for the Public (NEP) <https://www.nepdpg.org/home>

Nutrition Educators of Health Professionals (NEHP) <https://nehp.eatrightpro.org/home>

Nutrition Informatics (NI) <https://ni.eatrightpro.org/home>

Research (RDPG) <https://www.researchdpg.org/home>

School Nutrition Services (SNS) <https://sns.eatrightpro.org/home>

Weight Management (WM) <https://www.wmdpg.org/home>

Other DPGs

Clinical Nutrition Management (CNM) <https://www.cnmdpg.org/>
Diabetes <https://www.diabetesdpg.org/home>
Dietetics in Health Care Communities (DHCC) <https://dhcc.eatrightpro.org/home>
Dietitians in Medical Nutrition Therapy (DMNT) <https://www.dmntdpg.org/home>
Dietitians in Nutrition Support (DNS) <https://www.dnsdpg.org/>
Food and Culinary Professionals (FCP) <https://www.fcpdpg.org/home>
Hunger and Environmental Nutrition (HEN) <https://www.hendpg.org/home>
Management in Food and Nutrition Systems (MFNS) <https://www.mfnsdpg.org/home>
Nutrition Entrepreneurs (NE) <https://www.nedpg.org/>
Oncology Nutrition (ON) <https://www.oncologynutrition.org/home>
Pediatric Nutrition (PN) <https://www.pnpg.org/home>
Public Health/Community Nutrition (PHCN) <https://www.phcnpg.org/home>
Renal Dietitians <https://www.renalnutrition.org/home>
Vegetarian Nutrition (VN) <https://www.vndpg.org/home>
Women's Health (WH) <https://www.womenshealthdpg.org/home>

Member Interest Groups of the Academy

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) <https://www.aapimig.org/home>
Cultures of Gender and Age (COGA) <https://coga.eatrightpro.org/home>
Disabilities in Nutrition and Dietetics (Disabilities) <https://www.dndmig.org/home>
Global (GMIG) <https://gmig.eatrightpro.org/home>
Indians in Nutrition and Dietetics (IND) <https://ind.eatrightpro.org/home>
Latinos and Hispanics in Dietetics and Nutrition (LAHIDAN)
<https://www.eatrightlahidan.org/home>
National Organization of Blacks in Dietetics and Nutrition (NOBIDAN)
<https://www.nobidan.org/home>
Religion (RMIG) <https://rmig.eatrightpro.org/home>

Collegiate and Professional Sports Dietitian Association (CSPDA) <https://sportsrd.org/>
American Academy of Sports Dietitians and Nutritionists (AASDN) <https://aasdn.org/>

American Society of Nutrition (ASN) <http://www.nutrition.org/>
American Society of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (ASPEN) <https://www.nutritioncare.org/>
Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior (SNEB) <https://www.sneb.org/>

American Nutrition Association (ANA) <http://americannutritionassociation.org/>
Integrative and Functional Nutrition Academy (IFNA) <https://www.ifnacademy.com/>
Institute for Functional Nutrition (IFN) <https://www.ifn.health/ifn-home>
National Association of Nutrition Professionals (NANP) <http://www.nanp.org/>
School Nutrition Association (SNA) <https://schoolnutrition.org/>
SIBO Academy <https://www.siboacademy.com/>
The Association of Nutrition & Foodservice Professionals (ANFP) <http://www.anfponline.org/>
Women's Health Nutrition Academy (WHNA) <https://whnacademy.com/>

APPENDIX

University of South Carolina

Master of Science in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics

Prerequisite Course Requirements

(from accredited institutions of higher education)

To enroll in the USC MS/PND program, applicants must provide evidence of successful completion of the following list of prerequisite courses to ensure they have learned the foundational knowledge required to enter the program. Successful completion entails earning a grade of C or higher in each course. Official transcripts are the preferred form of evidence.

Applicants may present evidence of plans to complete up to 3 of these prerequisite courses within their USC MS/PND application. The plans to complete must include a projected course completion date prior to the first day of classes in the MS/PND program. For example, if an applicant is applying in April of 2026 to start the program in the Fall of 2026, they will include evidence of registration in a summer semester food science course with the course dates of May 30th through July 17th, 2026.

Applicants are to complete 3 credit hours or more in each of the following undergraduate level courses (or equivalent courses) prior to beginning the MS/PND program as evidenced in their transcripts:

1. Biochemistry
2. Biology
3. Chemistry
4. Food Science
5. Human Nutrition
6. Introductory Statistics or Research Methods
7. Microbiology
8. Organic Chemistry
9. Physiology
10. Exercise Physiology
11. Psychology or Sociology

Combination courses such as physio anatomy, integrated organic chemistry and biochemistry, or basic nutrition and food science will be considered on a case-by-case basis after review of syllabi and learning assessments. Please contact the program director with questions regarding acceptability prior to applying.

* Medical Terminology (1-3 credit hours or equivalent) is a preferred (not required) prerequisite. Applicants are encouraged to apply even if they have not completed this prerequisite. Admitted students who have not completed a previous medical terminology course will be required to complete a designated self-study equivalent within the first semester of the program. Refer to the program director for a current list of the accepted self-study options to fulfill this requirement.

USC MS PND Prerequisite GPA Calculation Form

You must have a minimum GPA of 3.0 in all completed prerequisite courses. You can calculate your GPA by using the following form. Below are the instructions. You will submit this form with your application materials. You will need your transcripts from the previous schools from which you earned credit in the required prerequisites.

USC MS/PND Prerequisite Courses (credit hours):

- Human Nutrition (3)
- Food Science (3)
- Biology (3)
- Chemistry (3)
- Microbiology (3)
- Organic Chemistry (3)
- Biochemistry (3)
- Physiology (3)
- Exercise Physiology (3)
- Psychology or Sociology (3)
- Introductory Statistics (3)

Please keep in mind that you may present evidence of plans to complete up to 3 of these prerequisite courses prior to the first day of classes in the MS/PND program when petitioning directly to the program director. Do not include the courses that you have yet to earn a final grade within the GPA calculations.

Calculate your prerequisite GPA using the following GPA Calculation Table.

1. Refer to the prepopulated course titles.
 - a. Provide the course number and title that visible in your transcript underneath the bolded course prerequisite title.
 - b. You may adjust the course title and credit value as appropriate.
 - i. For example, the Human Nutrition prerequisite course may be fulfilled by *NUTR 101 Introduction to Nutrition*.
 - c. You may provide additional courses if you completed a series of courses.
 - i. For example, you would enter Chemistry I and Chemistry II if you completed a two-semester series of basic chemistry.
2. Identify the Institution (i.e., college or university) in which each course was completed.
 - a. You may use the common acronym (e.g., USC for University of South Carolina)
3. Identify the Semester and Year for each course in the "Semester/Year" column.
4. Include the number of credits each course was worth in the "Credit Hours" column.
 - a. Refer to the minimum credit level for each prerequisite in the list above.

5. Enter the letter grade you earned in course in the “Grade Earned” column.
6. Refer to the ‘Grade Point Values’ Table below to determine the value to be entered in the “Grade Point Value” column.
 - a. For example, if you earned a “B+” in *STAT 251 Basic Statistics*, you would enter 3.3 into the “Grade Point Value” column.
7. Calculate the grade points for each course in the “Total Grade Points” column.
 - a. Multiply the number of credits in the “Credit Hours” column by the grade point value in the “Grade Point Value” column.
 - i. For example, *STAT 251 Basic Statistics* is a 3-credit course. Earning a “B+” in this course would provide a 3.3 grade point value. So, 3 credits x 3.3 grade point value = 9.9 total grade points.
 - ii. Check your math.

Course # & Title	Institution	Semester/ Year	Credit Hours	Grade Earned	Grade Point Value*	Total Grade Points (Credit Hours x Grade Point Value)
<i>Example: EXP 101 Example Entry</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>Fall/15</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>3.0</i>	<i>(3 x 3.0) = 9</i>
Human Nutrition						
Food Science						
Biology						
Chemistry						
Microbiology						
Organic Chemistry						

Biochemistry						
Physiology						
Exercise Physiology						
Psychology or Sociology						
Statistics						
*Medical Terminology						
*Course # & Title:						
*Course # & Title:						
*Course # & Title:						
Total (at time of application)						

*Medical Terminology is a preferred prerequisite and may be completed within the MS/PND program. Please do not include in calculations if not completed in educational history.

Grade Point Values

Letter Grade	Description	Grade Point Value
A+	Excellent	4.0
A	Excellent	4.0
A-	Excellent	3.7
B+	Better than Average	3.3
B		3.0
B-		2.7
C+	Average	2.3
C		2.0
C-		2.0
D+	Below Average	1.0
D		1.0
D-		1.0
F	Failing	0

To calculate your GPA:

Divide the total grade points for all prerequisite courses by the total number of credits earned in those courses. Use the calculation below.

Submit this form with your application materials.

$$\text{Grade Point Average (GPA)} = \text{Total Grade Points} \div \text{Total Credit Hours}$$

Prerequisite GPA: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

University of South Carolina – M.S. in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics

Example USC MS/PND Road Map

Fall Year 1	9	
PNDI 620 Nutrition Through the Life Cycle	3	No prerequisites
PNDI 700 Applied Nutrition Research	3	Prerequisites: Introduction to Statistics or Equivalent
PNDI 701 Performance Nutrition	3	Prerequisites: Human Nutrition or Equivalent
Spring Year 1	10	
PNDI 705 Performance Nutrition: Approaches & Advocacy	3	Prerequisites: PNDI 701
PNDI 710 Medical Nutrition Therapy I	3	Prerequisites: PNDI 700; PNDI 620 or equivalent
PNDI 752 Nutrition & Public Health	3	Prerequisites: PNDI 620 or equivalent; PNDI 700
PNDI 711 Performance Nutrition and Dietetics Supervised Experience Level 1	1	Prerequisites: PNDI 620 or equivalent; PNDI 700; PNDI 701 (<i>Research / PHN focus</i>) ~240 hours
<i>ServSafe Certification</i>		Necessary for PNDI 712 and PNDI 770 Coordination (by student or director) TBA
<i>Nutrition Skills Workshop 1</i>		Coordinated by program director
Summer Year 1	5	
PNDI 730 Nutrition Counseling & Education	3	Prerequisites: PNDI 620; PNDI 700
PNDI 712 Performance Nutrition and Dietetics Supervised Experience Level 2 (<i>FSM Workshops; Performance Nutrition Familiarization</i>)	1	Prerequisites: PNDI 752 or equivalent; PNDI 705; PNDI 710; *ServSafe Certification (~ <i>FSM and PHN focus</i>) ~ 240 hours
PNDI 713 Performance Nutrition and Dietetics Supervised Experience Level 3 (<i>Nutr. Workshops; Clinical Familiarizations</i>)	1	Prerequisites: HPEB 752; PNDI 710 Corequisite: PNDI 730 (~ <i>NT1/FSM focus</i>) ~ 240 hours
<i>Nutrition Therapy SE 1 Qualifying Exam</i>		Coordinated by program director
Fall Year 2	10	
PNDI 740 Medical Nutrition Therapy II	3	Prerequisites: PNDI 710
PNDI 750 Performance Nutrition Therapy	3	Prerequisites: PNDI 705; PNDI 710; PNDI 730
PNDI 770 Food Systems Management	3	
PNDI 714 Performance Nutrition and Dietetics Supervised Experience Level 4 (<i>Nutr. Workshop</i>)	1	Prerequisite: PNDI 710; Pass Qualifying Exam 1 Pre-/Corequisites: PNDI 730; PNDI 770 or equivalent (~ <i>NT2 and FSM focus</i>) ~ 240 hours
<i>Nutrition Skills Workshop 2</i>		Coordinated by program director
<i>Nutrition Therapy SE 2 Qualifying Exam</i>		Coordinated by program director
Spring Year 2	10	
PNDI 760 Leadership & Practice in Performance Nutrition & Dietetics	3	Prerequisites: PNDI 620, PNDI 700, PNDI 701, PNDI 752 or equivalent
PUBH 700 Perspectives in Public Health	3	ASPH requirement
PNDI 780 Performance Nutrition & Dietetics Capstone	3	Prerequisite: Permission of Instructor
PNDI 715 Performance Nutrition and Dietetics Supervised Experience Level 5	1	Pre-/Corequisites: Pass Qualifying Exam 2; PNDI 730, 740, 750, 760, and 770 or equivalent. (~ <i>NT3, FSM, Mgmt. focus</i>) ~ 240 hours
Total	44	~1240 SE hours

This road map is a guide as it demonstrates the typical schedule for completion of program requirements including learning assessments and opportunities not associated with credit hours (italicized).

Individual Development Plan (IDP) for Graduate Students
University of South Carolina – M.S. in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics

The Individual Development Plan (IDP) will aid the graduate student in creating and accomplishing both professional and skill-based goals to promote overall growth and development. For the graduate student to receive the maximum benefit from the IDP process, it is essential that both the graduate student and the faculty advisor participate fully in the process. The IDP will need to be revised as circumstances change, and it is most helpful if the advisor and graduate student work together to modify the IDP.

Name of Graduate Student _____

Department or Program M.S. in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics

Program Start Date _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Name of Primary Advisor _____

Department or Program _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Part I. Skills, Values, and Interests Assessment

Self-Assessment Results (to be completed by Graduate Student)

Students may use resources such as myidp.sciencecareers.org to complete an individualized skill, interest, and values assessment.

Skill Set Results

1 – Highly Deficient	2	3	4	5 – Highly Proficient

Interest Assessment Results

1 – Never want to do this in my career.	2	3	4	5 – Often want to do this in my career

Values Assessment Results

1 – Unimportant	2	3	4	5 – Essential

Part II. Goal Development

SMART Goals (Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic, Time-bound) (to be completed by Graduate Student for each of the categories below.)

Professional Development Goals (like career advancement goals)

Determine 2-3 professional development areas to enhance over the next semester. Refer to the values and interests assessment results. These may include but are not limited to expanding your professional network, identifying new mentors, learning about career options, attending professional events, volunteering in a professional organization, preparing for interviews, etc. Develop 2-3 professional development goals that meet the SMART criteria.

Professional Area	SMART Goal	Recurring? Y or N	Start Date	Target Completion Date	Evidence and/or Accountability
<i>Expand professional network</i>	<i>Meet and communicate professionally twice with 2 professionals in the field. May meet in-person, call, message, or email to communicate.</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>Sept. 1st, 2025</i>	<i>Nov. 30th, 2025</i>	<i>Show written correspondence with 2 new colleagues to advisor in IDP progress meeting (Dec. 2025)</i>

Skill Development Goals

Determine 2-3 skill areas to develop over the next semester. Develop 2-3 SMART goals that are skill oriented based on your self-assessment results.

Skill Area	SMART Goal	Recurring? Y or N	Start Date	Target Completion Date	Evidence and/or Accountability
<i>Time Management</i>	<i>Get training: Read about and apply two time management strategies to educational schedule.</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>Sept. 1st, 2025</i>	<i>Oct. 31st, 2025</i>	<i>Show advisor evidence of and discuss the two time management strategies at IDP progress meeting (Dec. 2025)</i>

Part III. Review of Past Semester (to be completed by returning Graduate Student)

Educational and Training Progress

Indicate in the table below at least 5 keystone developmental experiences acquired in the past semester and the professional and/or skill areas to which they contributed. Please consider including learning assessments, workshops, trainings, projects, presentations, publications, professional networking and stewardship experiences, nutrition therapy activities, research activities, peer mentoring, outreach and/or community involvement activities, food systems experiences, management activities, leadership or organizational activities, and any other learning activity that contributed to your individual development.

Development Activity/Experience	Semester or Date of Completion	Professional Area of Development	Skill Area of Development
<i>Research Manuscript assignment in PNDI 620 Applied Nutrition Research</i>	<i>Fall 2025</i>	<i>Responsible conduct of research – demonstrate responsible authorship and publication practices</i>	<i>Research Skills – experimental design, statistical analysis, interpretation of data</i> <i>Communication – writing scientific publications</i>

Part IV. Developmental Progress (to be completed by Graduate Student)

Provide a collective list of developmental goals achieved throughout the MS/PND program by adding and updating the following table.

Developmental Progress Table

Developmental Goal	Associated Skills	Related Activity	Anticipated Date of Completion	Date of Completion
<i>Communicate at least one nutrition message using a multimedia platform.</i>	<i>Technological Communication Publication</i>	<i>YouTube Character Explainer Video – Hydration Schedule</i>	<i>Fall 2025 – November 20th 2025</i>	<i>November 18th 2025</i>

Part V. Career Goals and Planning (to be completed by 2nd year Graduate Student)

What is your current career goal? (Which facet of dietetics or which population?)

Why does this appeal to you?

What other facet/population interests you? Why?

What additional training or experience is needed beyond completing this program prior to applying for positions? (Beyond passing the RDN exam and becoming an RDN/LDN)

Are there constraints that will affect your job search? (partner's career, visa issues, geographic limitations, etc.)

When do you anticipate going on the job market?

Part IV. Advisor Comments and Recommendations (to be completed by advisors)

In this section, advisors should evaluate:

- the graduate student's developmental progress from the previous semester
- the feasibility and appropriateness of the plan for the next semester
- the progress towards career goals

Primary Advisor Comments and Recommendations:

SE Hour Tracking Form

University of South Carolina – M.S. in Performance Nutrition & Dietetics

Supervised Experiential Learning Documentation: The program must establish procedures for tracking individual student's supervised experiential learning hours in professional work settings and other supervised experiential learning such as simulation, case studies and role playing. Hours granted for prior learning, if given, also must be documented.

The primary method of tracking student progress through competency achievement and supervised experiential learning hours will be through the digital competency tracking system. The secondary method of tracking is using the table below. Each student is responsible for completing this SE Hour Tracking form and obtaining approval signatures from appropriate faculty, preceptors, and/or advisors on a periodic basis (as determined by the student's advisor). See the example on the first row in red italic font.

Student Name:

Cohort:

Course	Learning Experience Title or Description	Type	Date	Start-End Time	Number of hours
<i>PNDI 700 Applied Nutrition Research</i>	<i>Data Collection Experience</i>	<i>Project Experience</i>	<i>10/21/2025</i>	<i>12:00pm to 4:00 pm</i>	<i>4</i>

SE Hour Tracking Form continued

Student Name:

Cohort:

[illegible]

2022 ACEND Competencies and Performance Indicators

Every five years the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) revises and publishes professional competencies that entry-level dietitians must achieve to be deemed competent to practice. These competencies are the basis for ACEND-accredited RDN programs. The competencies are accompanied by performance indicators that must be successfully completed for the achievement of the related competency. These performance indicators are embedded within the curriculum and learning assessments throughout the MS/PND program. Please see the comprehensive list of ACEND competencies and performance indicators below. These can also be found within the [ACEND Accreditation Standards](#) for Future Education Model programs.

GP Unit 1: Foundational Knowledge

Applies foundational sciences to food and nutrition knowledge to meet the needs of individuals, groups, and organizations.

Competency 1.1 Applies an understanding of environmental, molecular factors (e.g., genes, proteins, metabolites) and food in the development and management of disease. (S)	
Performance Indicators	
1.1.1	Analyzes the usefulness and limitations of epidemiological, clinical and other study designs and identifies trends in diet and disease. (S)
1.1.2	Demonstrates general understanding of nutrition and genetics, as it relates to health conditions. (K)
1.1.3	Communicates epidemiological evidence related to the relationship between diet and the development of disease. (S)
1.1.4	Demonstrates an understanding of research techniques and processes used to study the relationship between molecules (e.g., genes, proteins, metabolites) and microbes with disease states. (K)
1.1.5	Identifies the influence of food consumption on the development of diseases. (K)
Competency 1.2 Applies an understanding of anatomy, physiology, and biochemistry. (S)	
Performance Indicators	
1.2.1	Analyzes the impact of food and nutrition on physiological processes. (S)
1.2.2	Integrates knowledge of anatomy, physiology, and biochemistry to make decisions related to nutrition care. (S)
Competency 1.3 Applies knowledge of microbiology and food safety. (S)	
Performance Indicators	
1.3.1	Applies food safety principles of microbiological food spoilage and strategies for controlling microbial growth. (S)
1.3.2	Implements key principles and practices to make foods safe for consumption at all stages during the flow of food. (S)

Competency 1.4 Integrates knowledge of chemistry and food science as it pertains to food and nutrition product development and when making modifications to food. (S)
Performance Indicators
1.4.1 Analyzes the role of fundamental chemistry and organic chemistry principles on food, human health and metabolism. (S)
1.4.2 Integrates nutritional biochemistry knowledge to make informed food and nutrition decisions for optimal health. (S)
1.4.3 Evaluates the chemical nature and composition of food, on food quality, acceptability and compatibility. (S)
Competency 1.5 Applies knowledge of patho-physiology and nutritional biochemistry to physiology, health and disease. (S)
Performance Indicators
1.5.1 Examines nutritional biochemical indicators specific to the disease process. (K)
1.5.2 Interprets and analyzes the effect of diet, fluids, electrolytes and nutritional status on the development and progress of the disease process. (S)
1.5.3 Interprets and analyzes the effects of disease, clinical condition and treatment on nutritional health status. (S)
1.5.4 Analyzes the correlation between mental health conditions and nutritional health. (S)
Competency 1.6 Applies knowledge of social, psychological and environmental aspects of eating and food. (S)
Performance Indicators
1.6.1 Formulates food and nutrition services considering psychological and social factors to meet the needs of individuals, communities and populations. (S)
1.6.2 Articulates the impact of nutritional health on psychiatric disorders. (S)
1.6.3 Integrates knowledge of maximizing sustainability, food and water waste, reusable/ biodegradable items, local and global produce sourcing and access to food. (S)
1.6.4 Analyzes the environmental factors affecting access to services and/or adequate nutrition. (S)
Competency 1.7 Integrates the principles of cultural competence within own practice and when directing services. (D)
Performance Indicators
1.7.1 Demonstrates knowledge of the cultural competence models. (K)

1.7.2	Applies knowledge of foods eating patterns and food trends. (S)
1.7.3	Identifies challenges that arise when different cultures, values, beliefs and experiences exist between clients/patients and nutrition and dietetics professionals. (S)
1.7.4	Identifies and implements strategies to address cultural biases and differences. (D)
1.7.5	Applies culturally sensitive approaches and communication skills. (D)
1.7.6	Develops awareness of one's own personal beliefs, values and biases to better serve clients/patients of different cultures and backgrounds. (S)
Competency 1.8 Applies knowledge of pharmacology to recommend, prescribe and administer medical nutrition therapy. (S)	
Performance Indicators	
1.8.1	Identifies the classifications of nutraceutical pharmacological agents and the action of the body. (K)
1.8.2	Demonstrates understanding of pharmacokinetics, absorption, clearance, drug metabolism, latency period, drug and supplement metabolism, accumulation, half-life, and routes of administration. (S)
1.8.3	Identifies potential drug and food interactions based on physiological responses to pharmacological agents and takes appropriate actions. (S)
Competency 1.9 Applies an understanding of the impact of complementary and integrative nutrition on drugs, disease, health and wellness. (S)	
Performance Indicators	
1.9.1	Critically evaluates evidence-based literature to inform decisions about use of complementary and integrative nutrition. (S)
1.9.2	Applies an understanding of the impact of complementary and integrative nutrition on drugs, food, disease states and wellness. (S)
1.9.3	Identifies indications, use and contraindications of complementary and integrative nutrition. (K)
Competency 1.10 Applies knowledge of math and statistics. (S)	
Performance Indicators	
1.10.1	Chooses appropriate statistical methods, performs statistical analysis and interprets results in various data analysis situations. (S)
1.10.2	Communicates information on statistical methods, results and interpretation, both orally and in writing. (S)
1.10.3	Applies math skills to perform food and nutrition calculations. (S)

Competency 1.11 Applies knowledge of medical terminology when communicating with individuals, groups and other health professionals. (D)
Performance Indicators
1.11.1 Interprets and communicates medical terminology to non-health professional audiences. (D)
1.11.2 Uses acceptable medical abbreviations and appropriate medical terminology in all forms of communication. (D)
Competency 1.12 Demonstrates knowledge of and is able to manage food preparation techniques (D)
Performance Indicators
1.12.1 Demonstrates understanding of safe work habits and safety hazards and employs preventive safety measures. (K)
1.12.2 Converts recipes and ingredients based on client/patient's preferences or dietary needs. (D)
1.12.3 Develops recipes and menus and increases or decreases quantities served from the recipe. (D)
1.12.4 Evaluates recipes using sensory evaluation methods. (D)
Competency 1.13 Demonstrates computer skills and uses nutrition informatics in the decision making process. (D)
Performance Indicators
1.13.1 Analyzes appropriate data in electronic format to make best decisions related to nutrition and diet. (S)
1.13.2 Evaluates accuracy and reliability when accessing and evaluating nutrition information in electronic format. (S)
1.13.3 Operates nutrition informatics systems in practice. (D)
1.13.4 Uses electronic databases to obtain nutrition information and evaluate credible sources in decision making. (D)
1.13.5 Uses technology and informatics skills proficiently to aggregate data, enhance practice and client/patient care. (D)
Competency 1.14 Integrates knowledge of nutrition and physical activity in the provision of nutrition care across the life cycle. (D)
Performance Indicators
1.14.1 Evaluates, integrates and communicates nutritional requirements across the life cycle. (D)
1.14.2 Identifies nutritional risk factors across the life cycle. (D)
1.14.3 Teaches the benefits of physical activity across the life cycle to individuals, groups and populations. (D)
1.14.4 Explains and takes into consideration how nutrients, nutritional supplements and hydration influence physical activity and wellness. (K)
Competency 1.15 Applies knowledge of nutritional health promotion and disease prevention for individuals, groups and populations. (S)
Performance Indicators

1.15.1	Recognizes and communicates the cause of disease and nutrition risks. (K)
1.15.2	Identifies, prioritizes and implements health risk reduction strategies for individuals, groups and populations. (S)
1.15.3	Examines the influence of the determinants of health on health and wellness. (S)
1.15.4	Designs food and nutrition activities for various audiences considering factors relevant to individuals, groups and communities. (S)
1.15.5	Applies behavior change theories for nutritional health promotion and disease prevention. (S)
Competency 1.16 Gains a foundational knowledge on public and global health issues, policies and nutritional needs. (K)	
Performance Indicators	
1.16.1	Examines the trends, policies and current issues that impact public and global health from existing, new and reemerging diseases that spread through immigration, travel and global trade. (K)
1.16.2	Examines the impact of global food supply and sustainability and related factors. (K)
1.16.3	Examines how globalizing processes impact nutrition, nutrition education and nutrition related diseases in developing countries. (K)

GP Unit 2: Client/Patient Services

Applies and integrates client/patient-centered principles and competent nutrition and dietetics practice to ensure positive outcomes.

Competency 2.1 Applies a framework to assess, develop, implement and evaluate products, programs and services. (D)	
Performance Indicators	
2.1.1	Conducts or coordinates an assessment of the environment, competitive landscape and stakeholder opinions to identify and evaluate data needed to make decisions regarding nutritional products, programs and services. (D)
2.1.2	Designs nutritional products, programs or services that promote consumer nutritional health, dimensions of wellness, and lifestyle management. (D)
2.1.3	Creates a work plan or project plan to implement nutritional programs and services or launch products. (D)
2.1.4	Conducts an evaluation of a product, program or service by analyzing reasons for variance from expected outcomes and implements new strategies as appropriate. (D)
Competency 2.2 Selects, develops and/or implements nutritional screening tools for individuals, groups or populations. (D)	
Performance Indicators	
2.2.1	Considers all client/patient factors when selecting and developing nutrition screening tools. (D)
2.2.2	Evaluates the validity and reliability of the nutrition screening tools and modifies based on current evidence-informed practice. (S)

2.2.3	Leads the implementation of nutrition screening tools in collaboration with other health professionals. (D)
2.2.4	Prioritizes care based on results of screening considering complexity of care needs. (D)
Competency 2.3 Utilizes the nutrition care process with individuals, groups or populations in a variety of practice settings. (D)	
Performance Indicators	
<u>Nutrition Assessment</u>	
2.3.1	Selects and implements nutrition assessment tools for individuals, groups or populations. (D)
2.3.2	Interviews client/patient to collect subjective information considering the determinants of health. (D)
2.3.3	Conducts a nutrition focused physical exam. (D)
2.3.4	Takes a food and nutrition related medical history. (D)
2.3.5	Assesses physical activity and history of physical activity. (D)
2.3.6	Collects, assesses, and interprets anthropometric measures and body composition. (D)
2.3.7	Orders, collects, and interprets biochemical tests. (D)
2.3.8	Analyzes diagnostic test results relevant to nutrition (e g. diagnostic imaging related to fluoroscopy, swallowing evaluation, enteral feeding tube placement). (D)
2.3.9	Identifies signs and symptoms of nutrient deficiencies or excesses. (D)
2.3.10	Determines barriers that might influence a client/patient's nutritional status. (D)
2.3.11	Determines accuracy and currency of nutrition assessment data. (D)
2.3.12	Identifies patient appropriate validated formula and performs calculations to determine nutritional requirements. (D)
<u>Diagnosis</u>	
2.3.13	Analyzes and synthesizes nutrition assessment data to inform nutrition diagnosis(es) and nutritional plan of care. (D)
2.3.14	Devises PES (problem, etiology, and sign symptom) statement and outlines reasons for professional opinion cause and contributing factors. (D)
2.3.15	Prioritizes the nutrition diagnosis(es). (D)
<u>Intervention</u>	
2.3.16	Develops an individualized plan of care that addresses nutritional care needs diagnosis and client/patient nutrition goals in collaboration with the client/patient and team members. (D)
2.3.17	Orders nutrition prescriptions to address nutritional goals. (D)
2.3.18	Implements the nutrition plan of care or nutrition intervention with the client/patient and other team members. (D)
<u>Monitoring/Evaluation</u>	
2.3.19	Monitors and evaluates impact of nutrition intervention on the nutrition diagnosis. (D)

2.3.20	Develops and applies nutrition care outcome indicators to measure nutrition intervention. (D)
2.3.21	Assesses client/patient's compliance with nutrition intervention. (D)
2.3.22	Identifies barriers to meeting client/patient's nutrition goals and makes recommendations to modify the nutrition plan of care or nutrition intervention and communicates changes to client/patient and others. (D)
2.3.23	Summarizes impact of nutrition interventions on client/patient's nutrition outcomes, considering client/patient- centered care. (D)
2.3.24	Identifies, analyzes, and communicates reasons for deviation from expected nutrition outcomes. (D)
2.3.25	Evaluates the availability of services to support access to nutrition care and to help meet client/patient nutrition goals. (D)
<u>Documentation</u>	
2.3.26	Documents all elements of the nutrition care process following professional standards and organizational policies. (D)
2.3.27	Demonstrates coding and billing procedures to obtain payment for nutrition services under alternate health care payment models. (D)
Competency 2.4 Implements or coordinates nutritional interventions for individuals, groups or populations. (D)	
Performance Indicators	
<u>Medical Nutrition Therapy</u>	
2.4.1	Manages medical nutrition therapy for clients/patients. (D)
2.4.2	Applies and integrates understanding of foundational sciences to manage medical nutrition therapy, diet and disease management. (D)
2.4.3	Applies foundational science knowledge and medical nutrition therapy principles to establish, order, manage and evaluate the need for nutrition support when prescribing and administering nutritional oral, enteral and parenteral diets. (D)
2.4.4	Considers and applies all relevant factors when recommending the use of oral nutritional supplements. (D)
2.4.5	Refers/transfers care to relevant professionals when client/patient needs or required interventions are beyond personal competence or professional scope of practice. (D)
<u>Education</u>	
2.4.6	Applies education theories, adult learning, pedagogy and education principles when developing, modifying, delivering or implementing education materials. (D)
2.4.7	Assesses audience's readiness to learn and identifies barriers to learning. (D)
2.4.8	Develops or modifies nutrition education materials or delivery methods to meet the needs of the audience. (D)
2.4.9	Develops and provides evidence-informed nutritional wellness and therapeutic diet education to variety of audiences. (D)
2.4.10	Translates basic to advanced food and nutrition science knowledge into understandable language tailored to the audience. (D)
2.4.11	Communicates complex nutrition information to broad and diverse audiences. (D)
2.4.12	Evaluates effectiveness of nutrition education and makes modifications as required. (D)

<u>Psychological Counseling and Therapies</u>	
2.4.13	Assesses client/patient's nutritional needs and appropriateness for the recommended counseling or therapy. (D)
2.4.14	Applies counseling principles and evidence-informed practice when providing individual or group sessions. (D)
2.4.15	Identifies the indications, contraindications, benefits, risks and limitations of the counseling or therapy. (K)
2.4.16	Demonstrates understanding of transference and counter transference in the therapeutic relationship. (K)
2.4.17	Demonstrates awareness of various appropriate counseling techniques. (K)
2.4.18	Evaluates effectiveness of the counseling or therapy and makes modifications as required. (D)
2.4.19	Refers/transfers client/patient to appropriate health professionals when counseling therapy or client/patient's mental health issues are beyond personal competence or professional scope of practice. (D)
Competency 2.5 Prescribes, recommends, and administers nutrition- related pharmacotherapy. (S)	
Performance Indicators	
2.5.1	Applies knowledge of foundational sciences and disease when determining the appropriateness of the therapy. (S)
2.5.2	Demonstrates awareness of food and drug interactions. (S)
2.5.3	Assesses client/patient factors to determine the client/patient's indication for the nutrition-related pharmacotherapy. (S)
2.5.4	Considers client/patient factors, nutritional impact, indications, side effects, contraindications, benefits, risks, alternatives, and foundational sciences when prescribing, recommending, and administering nutrition related drug therapy. (S)
2.5.5	Critically analyzes the potential negative effects of nutrition therapy or supplement and determines the required knowledge, skill and judgment required to manage negative outcomes. (S)
2.5.6	Prescribes, recommends, and administers nutrition related pharmacotherapy adhering to professional standards and evidence-informed practice. (S)
2.5.7	Applies the standard of practice, legislation, organizational policies, and evidence-informed practices for prescribing. (S)
2.5.8	Applies the principles of safe drug administration. (S)
2.5.9	Monitors the response and the effects of the nutrition related drugs on the individual and takes the required action to make modifications or adjustments. (S)
2.5.10	Consults and refers/transfers client/patient to the appropriate health professional when client/patient's needs are beyond personal competence or professional scope of practice. (S)

GP Unit 3: Food Systems Management

Applies food systems principles and management skills to ensure safe and efficient delivery of food and water.

Competency 3.1 Directs the production and distribution of quantity and quality of food products. (D)	
Performance Indicators	
3.1.1	Manages or oversees the planning, designing and coordination of meals to ensure delivery of nutritionally sound meals. (D)
3.1.2	Analyzes the workflow design and makes recommendations for modifications or approves for implementation. (D)
3.1.3	Communicates the organization's mission and how work activities impact the services and organization. (D)
3.1.4	Establishes and analyzes policies and performance measures for quality and quantity of work. (D)
3.1.5	Implements systems to report on local, state and federal compliance. (D)
3.1.6	Directs and analyzes the evaluation of foodservice production and services to inform, change, and/or budget resources and department or corporate direction. (D)
3.1.7	Establishes a culture that is ethical and free of safety and health hazards. (D)
3.1.8	Investigates and optimizes opportunities to reduce the environmental impact of foodservice operations and to enhance sustainability. (D)
Competency 3.2 Oversees the purchasing, receipt and storage of products used in food production and services. (D)	
Performance Indicators	
3.2.1	Follows a matrix or measures to evaluate the need for financial, technical and equipment resources for the provision of foodservices. (D)
3.2.2	Applies ethical decision making to determine the need for reduction or increase in resources. (D)
3.2.3	Creates internal or external professional relations and/or agreements to solve problems in foodservice operations. (D)
3.2.4	Acts as a departmental and organizational liaison between contractual parties involved. (S)
3.2.5	Demonstrates knowledge of inventory control as it pertains to the food and supplies of the foodservice operation. (K)
3.2.6	Applies the principles of the process of receiving and storing products demonstrating adherence to food safety code, nutrition guidelines and regulations. (D)
3.2.7	Applies the relationship between forecasting and production as it pertains to recipe needs and organizational demand. (D)
Competency 3.3 Applies principles of food safety and sanitation to the storage, production and service of food. (D)	
Performance Indicators	
3.3.1	Maintains currency in and follows applicable legislation and guidelines. (D)
3.3.2	Incorporates the required safety and nutritional health policies and procedures in the organization's mission and policies. (D)
3.3.3	Develops a plan to minimize vulnerabilities in the food supply chain. (D)
3.3.4	Takes into consideration food allergies when preparing menus and foods. (D)

Competency 3.4 Applies and demonstrates an understanding of agricultural practices and processes. (S)	
Performance Indicators	
3.4.1	Has a working knowledge of different agricultural food production systems and related terminology and concepts including potential nutritional impact. (K)
3.4.2	Understands the local and global food markets and applicable nutrition regulations. (S)
3.4.3	Identifies and supports partnerships with local and global food growers and producers. (S)

GP Unit 4: Community and Population Health Nutrition

Applies community and population nutrition health theories when providing support to community or population nutrition programs.

Competency 4.1 Utilizes program planning steps to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate community and population programs. (D)	
Performance Indicators	
4.1.1	Recognizes how determinants of health, epidemiological findings, health disparities, political interest, availability of resources, and accessibility influence the nutritional health and well-being of a community and population. (D)
4.1.2	Conducts community and population based assessments considering all relevant factors. (D)
4.1.3	Identifies the resources and connects with partners needed for sustainability of the program. (D)
4.1.4	Develops and implements a program considering relevant data addressing the nutrition needs of the community or population. (D)
4.1.5	Interprets and uses nutrition surveillance and global health and safety data. (D)
4.1.6	Evaluates the program using measurement indicators and outcomes. (D)
4.1.7	Communicates evaluation findings, outcomes, recommendations and research findings to promote change and justify program. (D)
Competency 4.2 Engages in legislative and regulatory activities that address community, population and global nutrition health and nutrition policy. (D)	
Performance Indicators	
4.2.1	Interprets legal terminology used to establish nutrition regulations and policies for populations. (K)
4.2.2	Navigates governmental, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations to promote nutrition legislation and regulations that address public, population and global nutrition health. (D)
4.2.3	Analyzes political interests and their impact on program development, goals and objectives. (D)

GP Unit 5: Leadership, Business, Management and Organization

Demonstrates leadership, business and management principles to guide practice and achieve operational goals.

Competency 5.1 Demonstrates leadership skills to guide practice. (D)
Performance Indicators
5.1.1 Exhibits self-awareness in terms of personality, learning, leadership style and cultural orientation. (S)
5.1.2 Demonstrates understanding of social cues and team dynamics. (K)
5.1.3 Communicates at the appropriate level and understands emotions and emotional situations. (D)
5.1.4 Develops conversational and interpersonal skills. (D)
5.1.5 Reflects on situations and critically evaluates outcomes and possible alternate courses of action. (D)
5.1.6 Understands the mentoring role and practices mentoring and precepting others. (D)
Competency 5.2 Applies principles of organization management. (D)
Performance Indicators
<u>Planning</u>
5.2.1 Establishes operational plan considering budget, inventory control, labor and regular daily tasks. (D)
5.2.2 Aligns plans with the organizational strategic plan, mission and vision. (D)
<u>Organizing</u>
5.2.3 Assigns responsibilities to various team members according to scope of practice and personal competence. (D)
5.2.4 Sets and monitors clear targets for team members, departments and the organization aligned with common objectives and goals. (D)
5.2.5 Demonstrates an understanding of how individuals and groups interact within the organization. (D)
5.2.6 Takes into consideration individual and organizational culture and behaviors when planning and managing. (D)
<u>Management</u>
5.2.7 Engages in, manages or leads human resource activities adhering to applicable legislation and regulations. (D)
5.2.8 Integrates change management theories and conflict resolution skills to manage and promote positive change. (S)
5.2.9 Uses persuasive communication skills to influence or produce a desired outcome during negotiations and conflict resolution discussions. (D)
5.2.10 Understands and respects roles and responsibilities of inter professional team members. (D)
<u>Controls</u>

5.2.11 Collects, understands, and analyzes financial data to support fiscally responsible decision making. (D)
5.2.12 Conducts cost effectiveness and cost benefit analyses to identify ways to meet budget priorities. (D)
5.2.13 Analyzes components of a productivity system including units of service and work hours and makes recommendations. (D)
5.2.14 Sets controls to analyze the progress and effectiveness of the operational plan and budget. (D)
5.2.15 Collects and analyzes data to evaluate outcomes and determine if established goals and objectives are met. (D)
5.2.16 Reevaluates the plan to make modifications to ensure positive outcomes and that goals and objectives are met. (D)
<u>Time Management</u>
5.2.17 Applies principles of time management to monitor and enhance personal productivity and productivity of others. (D)
5.2.18 Prioritizes activities to effectively manage time and workload. (D)
<u>Motivation and Recognition</u>
5.2.19 Promotes team involvement and values the skills of each member. (D)
5.2.20 Models behaviors that maximize group participation by consulting, listening and communicating clearly. (D)
5.2.21 Takes innovative approaches to build support and maintain a diverse workforce. (D)
5.2.22 Coaches and advises team leaders on resolving differences or dealing with conflict. (D)
Competency 5.3 Applies project management principles to achieve project goals and objectives. (D)
Performance Indicators
5.3.1 Leads the development and completion of a project plan and budget. (D)
5.3.2 Identifies the project strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. (D)
5.3.3 Identifies and manages potential and real risks to the plan, individuals or organization. (D)
5.3.4 Conducts regular review of project to note strengths and opportunities for improvement and to implement adjusted actions. (D)
Competency 5.4 Leads quality and performance improvement activities to measure evaluate and improve a program services products and initiatives(D).
Performance Indicators
5.4.1 Identifies and communicates quality and/or performance improvement indicators and benchmarks using evidence-informed practice. (D)
5.4.2 Develops quality and/or performance improvement measurement tools and analyzes data to inform baselines and to identify root causes and potential solutions. (D)

5.4.3	Develops, implements and communicates a quality and/or performance improvement action plan for further improvement and monitors impact. (D)
5.4.4	Develops, implements and communicates an ongoing measuring and monitoring system to ensure ongoing quality and performance improvement. (D)
5.4.5	Applies change management theories and principles to effectively implement change. (D)
Competency 5.5 Develops and leads implementation of risk management strategies and programs. (D)	
Performance Indicators	
5.5.1	Assesses potential and real risks to an individual, group and or organization. (D)
5.5.2	Identifies and takes action to manage, reduce and or eliminate risk to self, others and the organization. (D)
5.5.3	Develops risk management plans and protocols. (D)

GP Unit 6: Critical Thinking, Research and Evidence-Informed Practice

Integrates evidence-informed practice, research principles, and critical thinking into practice.

Competency 6.1 Incorporates critical thinking skills in practice. (D)	
Performance Indicators	
6.1.1	Considers multiple factors when problem solving. (D)
6.1.2	Incorporates the thought process used in critical thinking models. (D)
6.1.3	Engages in reflective practice to promote change and continuous learning. (D)
Competency 6.2 Applies scientific methods utilizing ethical research practices when reviewing, evaluating and conducting research. (D)	
Performance Indicators	
6.2.1	Identifies, explains and applies the steps of the scientific method and processes. (D)
6.2.2	Articulates a clear research question or problem and formulates a hypothesis. (D)
6.2.3	Identifies and demonstrates appropriate research methods. (D)
6.2.4	Interprets and applies research ethics and responsible conduct in research. (D)
6.2.5	Collects and retrieves data using a variety of methods (qualitative, quantitative) and technologies. (D)
6.2.6	Analyzes research data using appropriate data analysis techniques (qualitative, quantitative, mixed). (D)
6.2.7	Translates and communicates research findings and conclusions through a variety of media. (D)
Competency 6.3 Applies current research and evidence- informed practice to services. (D)	

Performance Indicators	
6.3.1	Uses research terminology when communicating with other professionals and publishing research. (D)
6.3.2	Critically examines and interprets current research and evidence-informed practice findings to determine the validity, reliability and credibility of information. (D)
6.3.3	Integrates current research and evidence-informed practice findings into delivery of safe and effective nutrition care. (D)
6.3.4	Analyzes and formulates a professional opinion based on the current research and evidence- based findings and experiential learning. (D)

GP Unit 7: Core Professional Behaviors

Demonstrates professional behaviors and effective communication in all nutrition and dietetics interactions.

Competency 7.1 Assumes professional responsibilities to provide safe, ethical and effective nutrition services. (D)	
Performance Indicators	
7.1.1	Demonstrates ethical behaviors in accordance to the professional Code of Ethics. (D)
7.1.2	Engages in self-reflective practice activities to develop and maintain ongoing competence and professional behaviors. (D)
7.1.3	Adheres to nutrition related legislation, regulations and standards of practice. (D)
7.1.4	Applies client/patient-centered principles to all activities and services. (D)
7.1.5	Identifies and takes steps to manage unethical, incompetent and unsafe behavior. (S)
7.1.6	Practices in a manner that respects diversity and avoids prejudicial treatment. (D)
7.1.7	Adheres to legislative requirements and facility/employer guidelines regarding protection of privacy and security of information. (D)
7.1.8	Maintains confidentiality and security in the sharing, transmission, storage and management of protected health information. (D)
Competency 7.2 Uses effective communication, collaboration and advocacy skills. (D)	
Performance Indicators	
7.2.1	Applies effective and ethical communication skills and techniques to achieve desired goals and outcomes. (D)
7.2.2	Works with and facilitates intraprofessional and interprofessional collaboration and teamwork. (D)
7.2.3	Participates in advocacy activities to change or promote new legislation and regulation. (D)
7.2.4	Selects mode of communication appropriate to the messaging to meet the needs of the audience. (D)

Competencies, Standards & Scope for RDNs

Several guidelines are published to enable RDNs for self-evaluation purposes. RDNs must be competent in all aspects of the dietetics profession and pursue proficiency then expertise in their specific area of practice. Refer to the following resources to learn more.

Commission on Dietetic Registration

1. Scope and Standards of Practice- <https://www.cdrnet.org/scope>
 - Includes an algorithm tool that enables RDNs to evaluate, expand, and improve their practice.
 - Includes Focus Area Scope and Standards for RDNs <https://www.cdrnet.org/Focus>
 - For specialist credentials (Adult Weight Management, Nephrology, Oncology, Pediatric, Post-Acute, Sports/Human Performance)
 - For Journal Collection (Clinical Management, Diabetes, Eating D/O, Education of Practitioners, Disabilities, Food Systems Management, Mental Health/Addictions, Integrative & Functional Medicine, Nutrition Support, Public Health/Community, Sustainability)
2. Professional Development Portfolio - <https://www.cdrnet.org/PDPGuide>
 - Includes professional development self-assessment and competency plan builder.
3. Essential Practice Competencies 2020-2025 – [Example 2021](#)
 - Includes 14 Spheres
 1. Ethics
 2. Communication
 3. Leadership and Advocacy
 4. Critical Thinking and Decision Making
 5. Informatics
 6. Research and Scholarship
 7. Quality Management
 8. Food, Nutrition, and Dietetics
 9. Education and Counseling
 10. Clinical Care
 11. Business, Industry, and Product Development
 12. Community, Population and Global Health
 13. Foodservice Systems and Management
 14. Organization Management

Example Certificates of Insurance



STATE FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY AUTHORITY

INSURANCE RESERVE FUND
POST OFFICE BOX 11066
COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA 29211

Phone: (803) 737-0020

POLICY NUMBER	FROM	POLICY PERIOD	TO	TYPE OF INSURANCE	DATE PRINTED
T120080025	07/01/2024	07/01/2025		GENERAL TORT LIABILITY	21 JUN 2024

COVERAGE PROVIDED UNDER THIS POLICY PART IS SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING FORMS:
CD-01 CD-10 CD-12 CD-25 CD-37 CD-45 CD-47 CD-48

NAMED INSURED AND ADDRESS	CONTACT PERSON AND PHONE	FORM #	PAGE
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA	BRIAN R HANN		100 OF 100
RISK MANAGEMENT	(803)777-2828		
COLUMBIA, SC 29208	TYPE OF ACTIVITY		ACTIVITY #
	*** RENEWAL DECLARATION ***		001

EFFECTIVE 12:01 AM STANDARD TIME AT YOUR MAILING ADDRESS SHOWN ABOVE 1 OF 1

NUMBER OF
PERSONS

138
463
161
203
203
8550

PERSONNEL CLASSIFICATION

- LAW ENFORCEMENT
- DIRECTORS, EXEC, MANAGERS
- MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL
- CLERICAL PERSONNEL
- VOLUNTEERS
- OTHERS
- OPTIONAL PREPAID LEGAL

COVERAGE

LIMIT OF LIABILITY - \$1,000,000 PER OCCURRENCE



STATE FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY AUTHORITY

INSURANCE RESERVE FUND
POST OFFICE BOX 11066
COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA 29211

Phone: (803) 737-0020

POLICY NUMBER
T120080025

FORM TITLE
AMENDATORY ENDORSEMENT

FORM #
CD-10 (09/90)

PAGE
1 OF 1

NAMED INSURED AND ADDRESS

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
RISK MANAGEMENT
COLUMBIA, SC 29208

Attached To and Forming a Part of
Policy Number: T120080025

In consideration of the premium paid and subject to all the provisions of the Tort Liability policy not expressly modified herein, the Fund agrees to provide the following coverage:

Section IV. Persons Insured

- (e) Students who participate in work study, distributive education, apprentice or similar programs on the premises of private companies, but only during the course of their employment in such programs.

Number of students insured: 1078

June 21, 2024

DATE

ANNE MACON SMITH
Director

HENRY MCMASTER, CHAIR
GOVERNOR

CURTIS M. LOFTIS, JR.
STATE TREASURER

BRIAN J. GAINES
COMPTROLLER GENERAL



INSURANCE RESERVE FUND

POST OFFICE BOX 11066
COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA 29211
(803) 737-0020
FAX: (803) 737-0042

HARVEY S. PEELER, JR.
CHAIRMAN, SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

BRUCE W. BANNISTER
CHAIRMAN, HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

GRANT GILLESPIE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

June 21, 2024

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
RISK MANAGEMENT
COLUMBIA, SC 29208

Re: Insured: UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
Policy Number: P120080025A
Policy Period: 07/01/2024 - 07/01/2025

Dear Insured:

A medical professional liability policy has been issued to the above named insured with the dates of coverage as shown.

Employees are covered only while acting in the scope of their employment with the above named insured, pursuant to the S.C. Tort Claims Act, and are covered by limits specified in this Act.

This document does not provide individual coverage to any employee of the insured named above.

The S.C. Tort Claims Act 15-78-30(c) grants immunity to the healthcare providers including physicians. Any suit that arises naming the healthcare provider as a defendant must be amended to remove the individual healthcare provider and substitute the named insured.

Nothing in this form shall be held to vary, alter, amend, waive or extend any of the terms, conditions, provisions, agreements or limitations of the above identified policy or confer any other rights, extensions or privileges.

Very respectfully,

Anne Macon Smith
Director



STATE FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY AUTHORITY

INSURANCE RESERVE FUND
POST OFFICE BOX 11066
COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA 29211

Phone: (803) 737-0020

POLICY NUMBER	FROM	POLICY PERIOD	TO	TYPE OF INSURANCE	DATE PRINTED
P120080025A	07/01/2024	07/01/2025		MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY	21 JUN 2024

COVERAGE PROVIDED UNDER THIS POLICY PART IS SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING FORMS:
MD-36 MD-38

NAMED INSURED AND ADDRESS	CONTACT PERSON AND PHONE	FORM #	PAGE
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA RISK MANAGEMENT COLUMBIA, SC 29208	BRIAN R HANN (803)777-2828		97 OF 100
TYPE OF ACTIVITY *** RENEWAL DECLARATION ***			ACTIVITY # 001

1 OF 2

EFFECTIVE 12:01 AM STANDARD TIME AT YOUR MAILING ADDRESS SHOWN ABOVE

COVERAGE A: LIMITS 300K/600K PER OCCURRENCE, NO AGGREGATE

EMPLOYEES AND OTHER MISCELLANEOUS	NUMBER		
PHARMACISTS	37		
PHARMACISTS (PART TIME)	17		
THERAPISTS/TRAINERS	27		
THERAPISTS/TRAINERS (PART TIME)	11		
SOCIAL WORKERS\COUNSELORS	28		
NURSES	27		
NURSES (PART TIME)	3		
STUDENTS/INSTRUCTORS	3377		
PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT/NURSE PRACTITIONER	8		
PHY ASST/NURSE PRACTITIONER (PART T	15		
PSYCHOLOGIST	6		
PSYCHOLOGIST (PART TIME)	10		
		

INSTITUTIONS	NUMBER		
PER 100 OUTPATIENT VISITS - ACUTE	164		
PER 100 OUTPATIENT VISITS - NON-ACUTE	412		
		
		



STATE FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY AUTHORITY

INSURANCE RESERVE FUND
POST OFFICE BOX 11066
COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA 29211

Phone: (803) 737-0020

POLICY NUMBER	POLICY PERIOD	TYPE OF INSURANCE	DATE PRINTED
P120080025A	FROM 07/01/2024 TO 07/01/2025	MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY	21 JUN 2024

COVERAGE PROVIDED UNDER THIS POLICY PART IS SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING FORMS:
MD-36 MD-38

NAMED INSURED AND ADDRESS	CONTACT PERSON AND PHONE	FORM #	PAGE
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA RISK MANAGEMENT COLUMBIA, SC 29208	BRIAN R HANN (803)777-2828		98 OF 100
	TYPE OF ACTIVITY		ACTIVITY #
	*** RENEWAL DECLARATION ***		001

2 OF 2

EFFECTIVE 12:01 AM STANDARD TIME AT YOUR MAILING ADDRESS SHOWN ABOVE

INSTITUTIONS

COVERAGE B: LIMITS 1,200,000 PER OCCURRENCE PHYSICIAN ACTS, NO AGGREGATE

PHYSICIANS/RESIDENTS	NUMBER	RATE	PAID/REF
FULL TIME CLS I PHY - OCCURRENCE	11	10,000.00	110,000.00
PART TIME CLS I PHY - OCCURRENCE	2	10,000.00	20,000.00
VERBAL PHYSICIAN	10,000.00	10,000.00
VERBAL PHYSICIAN	10,000.00	10,000.00

USC M.S. in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics

Student Handbook Confirmation of Receipt & Statement of Agreement

I, _____, confirm that I have received a copy of the University of South Carolina M.S. in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics Student Handbook (hereto referred as MS/PND Student Handbook). My initial next to the following statements indicates my agreement:

_____ I have read and reviewed all program policies and procedures within the MS/PND Student Handbook.

_____ The policies and procedures within the MS/PND Student Handbook were discussed in the MS/PND Student Orientation.

_____ I understand all policies and procedures within the MS/PND Student Handbook.

_____ I agree to abide by the policies and procedures within the MS/PND Student Handbook.

_____ Both I and the program director will keep a copy of this signed statement until I am no longer enrolled in the MS/PND program.

Student Name (print)

Student Signature (sign)

Date: _____

MS/PND Program Director Signature (sign)

Date: _____