

NEW PROGRAM PROPOSAL FORM

Name of Institution: University of South Carolina Columbia

Name of Program (include degree designation and all concentrations, options, or tracks): Master of Science in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics

Program Designation:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Associate's Degree | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Master's Degree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's Degree: 4 Year | <input type="checkbox"/> Specialist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's Degree: 5 Year | <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral Degree: Research/Scholarship (e.g., Ph.D. and DMA) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral Degree: Professional Practice (e.g., Ed.D., D.N.P., J.D., Pharm.D., and M.D.) | |

Consider the program for supplemental Palmetto Fellows and LIFE Scholarship awards?

- Yes
 No

Proposed Date of Implementation: Fall 2025

CIP Code: 51.3102 Clinical Nutrition/Nutritionist

Delivery Site(s): 51102 (USC Columbia main campus) and 70347 (Lexington Medical Center)

Delivery Mode:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traditional/face-to-face
*select if less than 25% online | <input type="checkbox"/> Distance Education |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 100% online |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Blended/hybrid (50% or more online) |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Blended/hybrid (25-49% online) |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other distance education (explain if selected) |

Program Contact Information (name, title, telephone number, and email address):

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Institutional Approvals and Dates of Approval (include department through Provost/Chief Academic Officer, President, and Board of Trustees approval):

Department of Exercise Science: 4/12/2024

Arnold School of Public Health: 4/19/2024

Graduate Council Committee on Science, Math, and Related Professional Programs: 5/10/2024

Graduate Council: 5/13/2024

Provost: 7/22/2024

President: 7/24/2024

Board of Trustees – Academic Excellence and Student Experience Committee: 8/23/2024

Board of Trustees: 8/23/2024

Background Information

State the nature and purpose of the proposed program, including target audience, centrality to institutional mission, and relation to the strategic plan.

Nature and Purpose of the M.S. in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics

The M.S. in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics (PND) program will train graduates to become registered dietitian nutritionists (RDNs) competent in all aspects of dietetics practice with an emphasis on performance nutrition. The PND program will be housed within the Department of Exercise Science in the Arnold School of Public Health (ASPH) at the University of South Carolina (USC). This proposed program will be a two-year (5-semester) academic program in which students complete didactic curriculum and supervised experiential learning that enables them to earn a master's degree and a verification statement indicating eligibility to take the national Registered Dietitian Nutritionist credentialing exam and apply for state licensure. Within the program, students will gain educational experiences on-campus and on-site in professional settings within and around Columbia, SC. Approximately 1200 hours of supervised experience is integrated into the 44-credit hour curriculum in five themes of the field: nutrition therapy (450 hours), performance nutrition (150 hours), nutrition research (100 hours), community nutrition (200 hours), and food systems management (300 hours). The supervised experience courses are designed in a way to represent the comprehensive nature of dietetics practice. For example, performance dietitians provide nutrition therapy, manage nutrition and food services, provide nutrition education/outreach, and engage in nutrition research. Due to the progressive nature of the curriculum design, students will complete the didactic courses and supervised experiences in a specific order to ensure foundational knowledge is learned prior to its application in real-world settings.

The program will be accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) to ensure the program's graduates will qualify to take the national credentialing exam provided by the Commission on Dietetic Registration. The comprehensive breadth of the curriculum will focus on the traditional aspects (clinical, community, and management aspects) as well as non-traditional aspects such as performance nutrition, research, and advocacy. This balanced approach to dietetics curriculum will promote entry-level competency across all aspects of the dietetics field, will complement the existing exercise science and public health programs, and will contribute to a well-rounded educational offering within the Arnold School of Public Health at the University of South Carolina (USC). This program will be considered an ACEND Future Education Model Graduate Program (GP) in which the didactic and supervised experiential learning components traditionally divided into two separate programs (didactic and internship programs) will be combined into a single graduate-degree conferring program.

The PND program will address two unique niches: 1) an emphasis on nutrition at USC; and 2) the emphasis on performance nutrition in the field of dietetics. The PND program will be the first nutrition degree program at USC as well as the only degree program to train future dietitians at USC. Its emphasis on performance nutrition will address and promote the expansion of this facet of the profession ensuring the University is a continued leader in sports science as well as a new leader in nutritional sciences. There are over 300 dietetic graduate degree programs that train graduates to become RDNs, but only three of them focus on sports nutrition and human performance. The PND program at USC will address the need for more performance dietitians as well as advance the field of nutrition and dietetics.

In fact, the term “performance nutrition” is being used as a unique identifier in the title of the program to invoke the inclusion of all human performance aspects that intersect with nutrition and dietetics, not solely sports nutrition as the program includes providing nutrition care to non-competitive, recreational enthusiasts, non-traditional athletes, and individuals in the performing arts as well as traditional athletes and sports teams.

Target Audience

The target audience of the proposed program are candidates seeking to become performance RDNs working with individuals who and teams that have exclusive nutritional requirements due to performance demands and health exigencies. Candidates will have earned a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution, completed the prerequisite courses, and met all other admission criteria.

In just the past 12 months, approximately 20-40 inquiries about a performance nutrition program have been received by the Chair of the Department of Exercise Science alone. Given the number of informal inquiries about opportunities for performance nutrition graduate applicants, it is anticipated that the Arnold School of Public Health and the Department of Exercise Science will be large contributors of candidates along with the three ACEND-accredited Didactic Programs in Dietetics (DPD) in the state of South Carolina (Clemson University, South Carolina State University, and Winthrop University). These three DPDs require all but one or two (Exercise Physiology and Medical Terminology) of the PND program prerequisites as evidenced by their program of study publications

(<https://www.clemson.edu/cafls/food-nutrition-packaging-sciences/files/fdhn-nutrition-concentration-curriculum-dietetics-emphasis-2021-2022.pdf>, <https://scsu.edu/resources/pdfs/Final-2022-2024-Undergraduate-Catalog-1.24.pdf>,

<https://www.winthrop.edu/uploadedFiles/cas/nutrition/DPDstudenthandbook2324.pdf>) Out-of-state candidates are also included in the target audience for this program.

Centrality to Institutional Mission

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.

Education and community are themes that resonate across the university, school, and program mission statements. The goal is to improve lives by serving our community. The PND program mission statement is congruent with the mission of the University in that it includes the production of graduates who will contribute to their community.

Relation to Strategic Plan

The strategic priorities for USC in 2023-2028 include the values of access and transparency, inclusive excellence, as well as service and integrity. These values are inherently incorporated into the mission statement of the program. The PND program will feed directly into the initiatives associated with the current strategic priorities of USC as several strategies to reimagine the student experience as well as advance post-graduate success are embedded within the program infrastructure. For example, the design of this program fosters increased access by applying the principles of ACEND's Future Education

Model (FEM) and Competency-Based Education to develop a more efficient educational experience. As opposed to the duration 6-to-7 years of education in dietetics, the application of FEM reduced the dietetics education to 2 years. The program will be a two-year (5-semester) academic program which consists of 44-credit hours of didactic coursework and supervised experience. This model differs from the traditional dietetic education model that consists of a 4-year undergraduate degree in dietetics, a 6-to-12-month dietetic internship, and a two-year master's degree in any field. The more efficient educational model applied to the design of the PND program increases access and affordability for all students interested in becoming a dietitian regardless of the focus of their prior education. Additionally, the use of a competency-based education model allows for the inclusion of differentiated learning techniques and continual adjustment of supervised experiential learning plans that adapt to the needs of each student throughout the program. The PND program drives post-graduate success as supervised learning experiences are embedded within the curriculum to enable students to directly apply foundational knowledge, theory, and skill to real-life scenarios under the supervision of qualified preceptors in professional settings. These supervised experiences not only prepare the students for entry-level practice but also enable them to steward a relationship with the professionals within their field that will take on the role of future employers, colleagues, and mentors.

The proposed program will also contribute to the efforts of the Nutrition Consortium and other research groups and laboratories at USC by connecting those research members with program students who will be amid gaining knowledge and perspective on applied nutrition practice. The program students will complete didactic coursework in which they will explore research focus areas in the fields of nutrition, health, and exercise sciences. The program will also support research faculty and scholars by creating a network with regional practitioners in commercial and public settings. Stewarding a relationship with the professionals within these settings will increase the opportunity for collaborations on applied research in the fields of nutrition, health, and exercise science.

Nutrition research is a facet of the program curriculum as it aligns with professional competencies, evidence-based practice, and increased opportunity for RDs in nutrition research. The PNDI 700 Applied Nutrition Research course and research rotations within the PNDI 711 PND Supervised Experience Level 1 course will provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their ability to evaluate, develop, and apply scientific evidence in an ethical and comprehensive manner. Graduate students within this program will work with faculty researchers in the university including those within the Nutrition Consortium; the TecHealth Center; Department of Exercise Science; Department of Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior; and Department of Epidemiology & Biostatistics. Students will not only support faculty in their research pursuits but will also be able to identify opportunities to integrate research and dietetics practice in supervised experience activities.

The program will host an entirely new network of stakeholders at USC beyond university faculty and staff. Stakeholders of this program will include preceptors and practitioners within the regional community including but not limited to the Prisma Health system, Richland School District One, the South Carolina Department of Public Health, South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs, DaVita Kidney Care, Lexington Medical Center, MUSC Columbia Medical Centers, the Health Care Services Group, Inc., FoodShare SC, SC Thrive, and private practices throughout the region. Meetings with over 40 potential preceptors from these facilities has confirmed their interest and support for this program. Please refer to the letters of support in the appendix from a sampling of preceptors and potential employers. Preceptors from the community will be the primary providers of supervised experience rotations within the program curriculum. An ample number of preceptors have verbally committed to hosting PND program students and contributing to the program in advisory roles. Please refer to the SE Preceptor and Facility Chart for more information. Affiliation Memorandum of Agreements will be obtained and maintained for all external facilities in which students will learn from

preceptors during supervised experiences once the program is fully approved. The program design includes communication pathways that enable students, preceptors, and faculty to provide input and feedback during program evaluation for the purpose of continual program improvement. Satisfaction, accessibility, and performance will be continuously evaluated by the stakeholders within the program.

Rationale:

The USC PhD program in Exercise Science has been ranked as the top in the nation for the past decade by the National Academy of Kinesiology¹ and remains in the top 5 programs this year. Additionally, the university is considered one of the top sport science universities in the nation and one of the best in the world according to the global ShanghaiRankings². However, there is room to expand in these areas and continue to lead the way when it comes to excellence which would cement us as the premier program not only from a ranking standpoint, but also from a perceptual one. A performance nutrition graduate program would be a tremendous complement to the existing programs and is an important component of a well-rounded sport science, health science, and public health offering. This proposed program will also be a collaborative addition to the current degree programs in health sciences at the university (https://sc.edu/study/majors_and_degrees/index.php?filter=graduate+Health-Sciences#degrees-anchor). This program presents a unique opportunity to start a new degree program that fills a critical gap that is tangential to numerous areas of study at USC.. There are no existing programs at USC with which this new offering would compete. The program curriculum includes current plans for collaborations with the Department of Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior; College of Hotel, Restaurant, Sport Management; College of Nursing; and USC School of Medicine. The supervised experience rotations within the program curriculum will feature interdisciplinary experiences with members of the multidisciplinary teams including nurses and nurse practitioners, athletic trainers, physician and physician assistants, speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, exercise physiologists, dietary managers, etc. Future collaborations involving interdisciplinary curriculum will be explored with other healthcare-based academic programs at USC including, but not limited to:

- athletic training (https://sc.edu/study/majors_and_degrees/athletic-training-ms.php),
- coaching education (https://sc.edu/study/majors_and_degrees/coaching-education-ms.php),
- counseling (https://sc.edu/study/majors_and_degrees/counseling-and-rehabilitation-ma.php),
- exercise science (https://sc.edu/study/majors_and_degrees/exercise-science-ms.php),
- genetic counseling (https://sc.edu/study/majors_and_degrees/genetic-counseling-ms.php),
- nursing (https://sc.edu/study/majors_and_degrees/nealtest-ms.php)
- physical therapy (https://sc.edu/study/majors_and_degrees/physical-therapy-dpt.php),
- physician assistant studies (https://sc.edu/study/majors_and_degrees/physician-assistant-studies-ms.php)
- social work (https://sc.edu/study/majors_and_degrees/social-work-msw.php)
- speech language pathology (https://sc.edu/study/majors_and_degrees/speech-language-pathology-ms.php),

Assessment of Need

Provide an assessment of the need for the program for the institution, the state, the region, and beyond, if applicable.

National Need for the Program

¹ <https://nationalacademyofkinesiology.org/results/>

² <https://www.shanghairanking.com/rankings/grsssd/2023>

There is a national shortage of RDN programs as the number of graduates from Didactic Programs in Dietetics (DPD) is higher than the number of openings in RDN programs (e.g., Dietetic Internships (DI) or Graduate degree program/Dietetic Internship (MS/DI) combined programs)(Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND), 2024). Historically, only about half of undergraduate dietetic graduates were accepted into RDN programs because of the limited number of these programs (ACEND data, 2024). Efforts to increase the number of RDN programs have increased this rate to 73% in 2022 and 85% in 2023 (ACEND, 2024)(<https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/about-acend/acend-data>). However, these percentages only account for dietetic graduates of DPD programs and do not include potential applicants without formal dietetics education. There remains a demand for more RDN programs that confer a graduate degree (to meet the requirements to become an RDN) and that admit candidates without a bachelor's degree/verification statement from an ACEND-accredited DPD. The Future Education Model used in the design of this program is a newer model that enables individuals who earned degrees in fields other than dietetics to begin their dietetics education at the graduate level without having to earn another bachelor's degree or provide a verification statement (ACEND Accreditation Standards Traditional and Graduate Program, 2022).

There is also a high market need for RDNs. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, RDNs currently fill 78,000+ jobs. The projected growth in national employment opportunities for RDNs is 7% between 2022-2032, which is faster than average. The median salary is \$69,680 annually which has increased by \$6,630 in the past three years (<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/dietitians-and-nutritionists.htm>). These market projections are anticipated to further increase with the new RDN exam requirement of a graduate degree enforced in January 2024.

The growth in the performance nutrition area is remarkable. As college, Olympic, and professional athletics teams expand their nutrition staff and resources, the military has followed suit and utilizes performance nutrition for special operations units as well as their general branches (For more information, please click on the link for each of the following: [U.S. Airforce](#), [U.S. Army](#), [U.S. Navy](#), [Special Operations](#), and [Tactical Human Optimization Rapid Rehabilitation and Reconditioning \(THOR3\)](#)). The U.S. Department of Defense focus on the nutrition environment led to the development of the Military Nutrition Environment Assessment Tool (mNEAT), the Consortium for Health and Military Performance (CHAMP) ([Robinson, et al., 2023](#)) as well as investigations into dietary supplement use amongst military service members ([Knapik, et al., 2022](#)). There is a notable shortage of qualified RDNs specifically trained in both aspects of health and human performance for these opportunities given the low number of performance nutrition/sports dietetics programs. .

There are only three other ACEND-accredited dietetic graduate degree programs in the U.S. that provide similar content (please click each linked title for more information):

- 1) [Florida State University M.S. in Exercise Physiology – Sports Nutrition major](#)
- 2) [Merrimack College M.S. in Nutrition and Human Performance](#)
- 3) [Teacher's College Columbia University M.S. in Nutrition and Exercise Physiology](#)

Of over 300 programs which applicants may choose from to become an RDN, these three are the only graduate programs that emphasize nutrition and sports performance. These programs are all ACEND-accredited master's degree programs with similar content to the proposed program. The program at FSU only accepts students who have completed an ACEND-accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics (typically a bachelor's degree program).

South Carolina and Regional Need for the Program

The state of South Carolina only has one other ACEND-accredited program (<https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/accredited-programs/program-directory>) that enables graduates

to sit for the RDN exam: the Winthrop University M.S. in Human Nutrition and Dietetic Internship Program (<https://www.winthrop.edu/cas/nutrition/dietetic-internship.aspx>). This program recently added the online master's degree component to their longstanding, successful dietetic internship to meet the new ACEND accreditation requirements. This program differs from the proposed program in a few ways:

- 1) It only accepts applicants who have a verification statement from an ACEND-accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) (typically a bachelor's degree program).
- 2) The M.S. coursework component is entirely online.
- 3) This program emphasizes clinical nutrition therapy as opposed to performance nutrition.

The fact that this program only accepts applicants who have earned a DPD verification statement means that individuals with bachelor's degrees in parallel fields (e.g., exercise science, health science, public health, nutritional science, biological sciences, medical sciences, food science, etc.) cannot apply until they complete all foundational (~30-40 credits) and all dietetic didactic course requirements (~ 26-40 credits) within an ACEND-accredited DPD bachelors program to earn the DPD verification statement. Once these individuals have completed the 56-80 credits and earned their verification statement from a DPD program, they then are able to apply to a traditional dietetic internship and graduate program (another 30-75 credits).

The proposed program, on the other hand, provides the dietetic didactic requirements within its curriculum and therefore does not require them as prerequisites to the program. It also does not require applicants to have enrolled in or completed an ACEND-accredited DPD program. Dietetics courses build on knowledge acquired in the foundational courses which are present in most science degrees and are widely available for degree- and non-degree seeking or postbaccalaureate students.. The proposed program curriculum provides both the didactic and supervised experience components of dietetics education that would enable students without dietetics backgrounds to apply and succeed.

The foundational course requirements are similar across all dietetic programs and include the basic sciences, psychology/sociology, human nutrition, and statistics. The dietetic didactic requirements include dietetics courses such as life cycle nutrition, community nutrition, medical nutrition therapy courses, food management, nutrition counseling and/or education, etc. While the MS/DI program at Winthrop requires all of these prerequisites and requires that they are obtained from an ACEND-accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics, the proposed USC MS/PND program only requires the foundational courses as prerequisites and does not require a specific pathway to meet these criterion. Efforts are underway to develop and potentially propose a "Preparatory Pathway" to expand the program and allow for prerequisite completion in the year prior (Year 0). Upon completion of the program approval process, program changes, such as this, will be proposed. For evidence of plans for these future program amendments, please see the attached draft program of study entitled "USC MS/PND Preparatory Program of Study". The details surrounding conditional enrollment, implementation, and evaluation are in the planning stages.

Another difference between Winthrop's MS/DI program and the proposed USC MS/PND program relates to the segmentation versus comprehensive way competencies are achieved. The focus of traditional dietetic internships is to provide a minimum of 1000 hours supervised practice to promote achievement of professional competencies (a.k.a. CRDNs) in professional settings. The didactic curriculum in graduate degree programs that pair with ACEND-accredited dietetic internships are not required to include dietetic "knowledge" competencies (a.k.a. KRDNs) as these are achieved in the DPD prerequisite. All curriculum (didactic and supervised experience) within Future Education Model programs, such as the proposed MS/PND program, must align and lead to the achievement of all dietetic competencies (e.g., KRDNs and CRDNs are combined).

South Carolina has three ACEND-accredited dietetic bachelor's degree programs (DPD): (Clemson University, South Carolina State University, and Winthrop University). The graduates of these programs along with all other bachelor's degree programs would be able to apply if they completed the required prerequisite courses. Most of the course prerequisites (10 to 11 of the 12) are within the curriculum requirements of these three DPDs in SC. The graduates of the three SC DPD programs will have completed 83-92% of these course prerequisites. Academic benchmarking using a sampling of 15 dietetic graduate programs across the nation informed the prerequisite course list of the PND program. Exercise Physiology was a lone outlier and is uniquely specific to the performance nutrition emphasis of the PND program. Medical terminology was typically only required in programs accepting applicants without previous medical experience. Although inquirers with an educational background in the sciences will have completed most of the course prerequisites, applicants of any educational background may enroll in postbaccalaureate studies to complete these necessary requirements to ensure that they have appropriate foundational knowledge. The need to develop a pathway for prerequisite course completion will be addressed in the future depending on evaluation of need.

To put the need and room for growth within South Carolina into context, the states of Georgia (population of approx. 10 million) and North Carolina (population of approx. 10.5 million) respectively host 8 and 12 ACEND-accredited programs that enable graduates to sit for the RDN exam. With a population of over 5 million and only one ACEND-accredited RDN program (master's program), South Carolina provides ample opportunity for future RDN programs and practitioners. At any given time, there are 60-80 positions available for RDNs in South Carolina with 5-20 positions related to performance nutrition (Indeed, Retrieved August 16, 2024, from <https://www.indeed.com/jobs?q=Dietitian&l=SC&start=10&vjk=0e7a60fcbb9c9ac4> and <https://www.indeed.com/q-Sports-Dietitian-jobs.html?vjk=70ec28d0ec5475ed>). Please see below for more information about employment opportunities.

Transfer and Articulation

No special articulation agreements for the program have been planned at this time. However, the program will accept transfer credit according to USC policies: no more than 15 semester hours of graduate credit may be transferred into a program that requires 37-45 hours and only credits with grades of B or better (equivalent to a 3.0 on a 4.0 scale) may be transferred from another institution into any graduate degree program. Course work transferred for credit must be from an accredited institution.

Employment Opportunities

According to the 2021 Compensation and Benefits Survey of the Dietetics Profession (AND Compensation Survey, 2021), 39% of RDNs work for a for-profit firm, 37% work for a non-profit (other than government), 16% work for the government, 8% are self-employed, and 1% work for the military.

Occupation	State		National		Data Type and Source
	Expected Number of Jobs	Employment Projection	Expected Number of Jobs	Employment Projection	
Dietitians and Nutritionists (SOC 29-1031)	1,200 in 2030; average	11.1%	5,200	7% growth 2022-32	EDEPS and Bureau of Labor Statistics

	annual openings is 90				
Dietetic Technicians (SOC 29-2051)	500 in 2030; average annual openings is 40	6.4%	2,300	3-4% growth 2022-2032	EDEPS and O*Net

Supporting Evidence of Anticipated Employment Opportunities

Provide supporting evidence of anticipated employment opportunities for graduates.

Based on the data provided on the US Department of Labor and Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) website, the 7% growth expected to occur between 2022-2032 is faster than the average for all occupations. An average of 5,200 new positions for dietitians are projected to develop each year throughout the decade. The BLS attributes the anticipated growth to the increased interest in the role of food and nutrition in promoting wellness and preventative care. The well-established role of diet and nutrition in preventing and managing common health conditions such as heart disease and diabetes leads to an increased need for dietetic and nutrition services. The Economic Development and Employer Planning System estimates the average annual openings for dietitians and nutritionists in SC is 90. The M.S. in Human Nutrition and Dietetic Internship program at Winthrop University may enroll a maximum of 21 interns per year. The demand (90 annual openings) far outweighs the current supply (maximum of 21 potential RDNs) each year in SC revealing the need for another dietetics graduate degree program in the state. It is important to note that graduates of other nutrition/nutritional science graduate degree programs, that are not ACEND-accredited dietetics programs, are not able to become RDNs that are licensed to exclusively practice medical nutrition therapy with individuals diagnosed with nutrition-related conditions including obesity and diabetes.

There currently is a paucity of data on sports and performance nutrition related positions for RDNs across the nation and region. Periodic online searches for “performance dietitian nutritionist” and “sports dietitian nutritionist” job postings reveal demand. For example, the American Sports and Performance Dietitians Association (ASPDA) job board listed 41 jobs in the month of August 2024 (<https://aspda.boxwoodgo.com/jobs>). The Sports and Human Performance Nutrition Dietetics Practice Group of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics posted 8 job positions for the Fall of 2024 (<https://www.shpndpg.org/home>). These two resources are more focused on performance RDNs while a general search for these terms on larger job search engines lead to more positions (e.g., 50+ job postings for sports nutritionist/dietitian on Indeed (<https://www.indeed.com/q-Sports-Nutrition-jobs.html?vjk=72c33c72167d16fa>)).

RDNs can work in any setting that includes a population that relies on intake of food for health and performance from school districts to hospitals and athletic divisions to military branches. Registered dietitian nutritionists (RDNs) are credentialed practitioners whose discipline expands across several primary practice areas including clinical nutrition (acute/inpatient (39%), ambulatory care (14%), and long term care (7%)); community and public health nutrition (10%); management and executive leadership (10%); consultation, business & industry, entrepreneur (9%); and education & research (6%) (AND Compensation Survey, 2021). Sports nutrition is one of the numerous focus areas of the primary positions of RDNs including (AND Compensation Survey, 2021):

Agriculture
Allergy/immunology
Bariatrics

Cardiovascular
College/University dining

Community nutrition/public health
Communications/journalism

Culinary nutrition	Malnutrition	Pediatric nutrition
Diabetes care	Management	Preventative care/wellness
Digital/mobile health	Marketing	Quality management
Disordered eating	Maternal and child health	Renal nutrition
Food/nutrition counseling	Media/public relations	School nutrition services
Food safety	Nutrigenomics	Sports nutrition
Gastroenterological nutrition	Nutrition and food policy	Sustainability
Global health	Nutrition support (tube feeding)	Weight management
Integrative/functional medicine	Oncology	

The comprehensive nature of the MS/PND program curriculum upholds the ACEND Standards requirement for entry-level competency across all sectors of the field, but also allows students to experience multiple facets of the field to make informed decisions regarding future employment. Performance nutrition is an emphasis, but graduates of the proposed program will be able to gain entry-level employment across the scope of the field.

RDNs holding one or more specialty certifications correlated with a more significant wage premium (AND Compensation Survey, 2021). The Certified Specialist in Sports Dietetics (CSSD) is among the six board certifications offered to RDNs by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (<https://www.cdrnet.org/board-certified-specialist>). CSSD exam eligibility requirements include documentation of 2,000 hours of sports dietetics practice as an RDN within the past 5 years (<https://www.cdrnet.org/cssd-eligibility-requirements>). A CSSD is not required by RDNs to practice in performance nutrition settings as evidenced by the eligibility requirements. The consideration of CSSD examination content during program curriculum development was a professional benchmarking effort to ensure appropriateness and application of curriculum (CDR CSSD Exam Specification Document, 2022 <https://www.cdrnet.org/vault/2459/web//CDR%20CSSD%20ECO%202023%20-%20effective%2011-2023.pdf>)

Description of the Program

Projected Enrollment			
Year	Fall Headcount	Spring Headcount	Summer Headcount
2025	5	5	5
2026	12	12	7
2027	16	16	9
2028	19	19	10
2029	19	19	10

Explain how the enrollment projections were calculated.

It is anticipated that 5 students will be enrolled as the first class in Fall 2025. The goal is to gradually increase enrollment so that Fall 2026 cohort will have 7 students, the Fall 2027 cohort will include 9

students, and the Fall 2028 cohort will include 10 students. Each cohort completes 5 semesters (2 Falls, 1 Summer, 2 Springs). For example, in 2026, 5 students will be in year 2 while 7 students will be in year 1 of the program, hence 12 students in Fall & Spring 2026. See the table below for clarification.

	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
1 st Year Student Enrollment	5	7	9	10
2 nd Year Student Enrollment	0	5	7	9
Total Student Enrollment	5	12	16	19

Besides the general institutional admission requirements, are there any separate or additional admission requirements for the proposed program? If yes, explain.

Yes

No

In addition to the general institutional admission requirements, applicants must have:

1. Completed DICAS application (<https://dicas.liaisoncas.com/>) and \$50 fee
2. Resume or Curriculum Vitae
3. Completion of all required course prerequisites (credit hours):
 - a. Human Nutrition (3)
 - b. Food Science (3)
 - c. Biology (3)
 - d. Chemistry (3)
 - e. Microbiology (3)
 - f. Organic Chemistry (3)
 - g. Biochemistry (3)
 - h. Human Physiology (3)
 - i. Exercise Physiology (3)
 - j. Psychology or Sociology (3)
 - k. Introductory Statistics (3)

*Applicants may present evidence of plans to complete up to 3 of outstanding prerequisite courses with completion dates prior to the first day of classes in the PND program.
4. Preferred course prerequisite: Medical Terminology (1-3 credit hours or equivalent)
 - a. Applicants are encouraged to apply even if they have not completed this prerequisite.
 - b. 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.
 - c. Please see the program director for a current list of the accepted self-study options to fulfill this requirement. (Please see the appendix for this list of medical terminology courses).
5. Preferred minimum GPA from bachelor's and all prerequisites of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.
6. Must earn a grade of B or higher in the Human Nutrition prerequisite course.
7. Three letters of recommendation (preferred that both professional and academic are included)
8. Application Essay addressing the following:
 - a. Applicant's motivation to become a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist and career goals.
 - b. Highlights of applicant's experience/exposure to the professional field of dietetics (ex. shadowing, professional conferences, volunteer and/or paid work)

- c. Aspects of the USC program that appeal/interest the applicant.
 - d. What does the applicant hope to gain from the USC PND program (beyond fulfilling the requirements to sit for the RDN exam)?
 - e. 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.
9. Candidates for admission will be scheduled for a virtual interview with our Admission & Curriculum Committee (ACC). The candidates will expand upon their Application Essay and, in a fair and equitable manner, the ACC will develop and ask the same standardized questions to all candidates of each application season.

Additional Application Requirements for International Applicants

- English Language Proficiency:
 - TOEFL or IELTS scores are required for those whose native language is not English.
 - a satisfactory score on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) - minimum score of 80 internet-based, 230 computer-based, or 570 paper-based - or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Academic Course Type 2 exam - minimum overall band score of 6.5.
 - This requirement may be waived for applicants that have earned a prior degree from a US institution or if language of instruction at the international institution was English.
 - Test scores will be entered into the DICAS application under the "Standardized Tests" section.
- Non-US institution transcripts must be verified by World Education Services (WES) or equivalent evaluation service.

Curriculum

Below is the Program of Study for the USC M.S. in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics which reveals the intended schedule of course offerings and program course requirements.

Fall 1		9 cr.
PNDI 620/HPEB 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/HPEB 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

New Courses

All but one course (PUBH 700 Perspectives in Public Health) in the PND program are new; however, while PNDI 620 and PNDI 752 are new courses, they are cross-listed with and identical to two existing courses (HPEB 620 and HPEB 752). For each of the courses below, the bulletin course description and full course description are provided.

Nutrition Through the Life Cycle (PNDI 620; 3 credits) – Examination of nutritional concerns, requirements, and metabolism from pre-conception through the aging process; analysis of cultural, environmental, psychosocial, physical, and economic factors affecting nutritional status through the life cycle; and methods for assuring adequate nutrition through dietary selection, promotion of healthy eating throughout the life cycle and nutritional assessment for each state of the life cycle.

This course is designed to orient the student to nutrition principles guiding growth and development and provide skills in development of age-appropriate nutritional interventions. This course will involve examination of nutritional concerns, requirements, and metabolism from pre-conception through the aging process; analysis of cultural, environmental, psychosocial, physical, and economic factors affecting nutritional status through the life cycle; and determination of nutritional adequacy based on the dietary guidelines for Americans. Insights necessary for understanding and evaluating empirically based information at different stages of life and from different academic perspectives will be highlighted. Cross-listed with HPEB 620.

Applied Nutrition Research (PNDI 700; 3 credits) - Application of the scientific method in nutrition research and practice including research design, execution, dissemination, and translation of findings.

In this course, students will learn about the application of the scientific method in nutrition research and the application of scientific evidence in nutrition practice. Students will learn and practice research design, data collection, data analysis, the Institutional Review Board process, and dissemination of research findings. The translation and application of research findings in dietetics practice will be emphasized. This course is required for students in the M.S. in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics program.

Performance Nutrition (PNDI 701; 3 credits) – Nutritional needs, nutrition strategies, and nutrition-related factors affecting athletic performance in a variety of sports and performance activities.

In this course, students will learn about the specific nutritional needs of healthy athletes engaging in a variety of performance activities from sports to dance. Students will learn to estimate nutritional needs, develop nutrition plans, and evaluate popular nutrition strategies utilized by athletes. The nutrition-related factors affecting athletic performance in power/strength, endurance, and combination sports will be included in this course. Students will apply information surrounding nutrient sources, nutrient timing, nutrition periodization when developing culturally appropriate and client-centered performance nutrition plans.

Performance Nutrition: Approaches & Advocacy (PNDI 705; 3 credits) – Unique topics specific to the approaches within and advocacy of performance nutrition and sports dietetics. Prerequisite: B or better in PNDI 701.

This course focuses on the topics unique to the performance nutrition facet of the dietetics field including but not limited to cultural competency; stewarding relationships, performance nutrition advocacy, persuasive communication, and nutrition messaging; and performance optimization, nutrition informatics, specialization, and scope of practice in performance nutrition. Students will explore ways in which traditional dietetic strategies are adapted and/or modified to enhance physical performance.

Medical Nutrition Therapy I (PNDI 710; 3 credits) - Application of nutrition and dietary interventions in health and disease using the principles of medical nutrition therapy and the Nutrition Care Process. Students will learn about the pathophysiology of nutrition-related diseases, nutrition assessment, diagnosis, intervention, monitoring, and evaluation to manage disease conditions, recovery, and/or improve the quality of life. Prerequisites: B or better in PNDI 620 or HPEB 620; B or better in PNDI 700.

This course is the first of a two-course series designed to provide the skills and knowledge necessary for the application of medical nutrition therapy in the prevention, management, and treatment of nutritionally related health conditions. The focal component will be the utilization of the Nutrition Care Process and ADIME model to manage disease conditions, enhance recovery, and/or improve the quality of life. Medical terminology and documentation will be covered. Students will learn about the application of foundational scientific knowledge, pharmacology, pathophysiology, and nutrigenomics/nutrigenetics within individualized nutrition care plans. This course is restricted to and required for students within the M.S. in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics program.

Performance Nutrition & Dietetics Supervised Experience Level 1 (PNDI 711; 1 credit) - Foundational supervised experience in the field of nutrition and dietetics that applies knowledge about life cycle nutrition, general nutrition and health, nutrition research, and performance nutrition in practice settings. Prerequisites: B or better in PNDI 620 or HPEB 620; B or better in PNDI 700; B or better in PNDI 701.

The Performance Nutrition & Dietetics Supervised Experience Level 1 (PND SE 1) is the first of a series of SE courses that provide students the opportunities to achieve professional competencies while engaging in learning activities that increase their understanding of professional practice in multiple facets of the discipline. As the first in the series, PND SE 1 consists of foundational rotations in professional settings under the supervision and guidance of professional preceptors. Students will apply knowledge acquired in the classroom while engaging in professional activities related but not limited to research, life cycle nutrition, and public health nutrition. Students will individually be assigned to one or more rotations and will acquire a unique learning experience within this course. Each rotation will include a main preceptor and setting location. Preceptors will lead learning experiences and activities that align with professional competencies and practice.

Performance Nutrition & Dietetics Supervised Experience Level 2 (PNDI 712; 1 credit) – Preparatory supervised experience in the field of nutrition and dietetics that applies knowledge about public health nutrition, food service, food systems, and nutrition services in practice settings. Prerequisites: B or better in PNDI 752 or HPEB 752; B or better in PNDI 705; B or better in PNDI 710.

The Performance Nutrition & Dietetics Supervised Experience Level 2 (PND SE 2) is the second of a series of SE courses that provide students the opportunities to achieve professional competencies while

engaging in learning activities that increase their understanding of professional practice in multiple facets of the discipline. As the second in the series, PND SE 2 consists of progressive rotations in different professional settings under the supervision and guidance of professional preceptors. Students will apply knowledge and experience previously acquired in the program while engaging in professional activities related but not limited to food systems, public health nutrition, and performance nutrition. Students will individually be assigned to one or more rotations and will acquire a unique learning experience within this course. Each rotation will include a main preceptor and setting location. Preceptors will lead learning experiences and activities that align with professional competencies and practice.

Performance Nutrition & Dietetics Supervised Experience Level 3 (PNDI 713; 1 credit) - Supervised experience in the field of nutrition and dietetics with an emphasis on introductory nutrition therapy, nutrition counseling, and nutrition education in various practice settings. Prerequisites: B or better in PNDI 752 or HPEB 752; B or better in PNDI 705; B or better in PNDI 710; B or better in PNDI 730.

The Performance Nutrition & Dietetics Supervised Experience Level 3 (PND SE 3) is the third of a series of SE courses that provide students the opportunities to achieve professional competencies while engaging in learning activities that increase their understanding of professional practice in multiple facets of the discipline. PND SE 3 consists of progressive rotations in therapeutic professional settings under the supervision and guidance of professional preceptors. Students will apply knowledge and experience previously acquired in the program while engaging in professional activities related but not limited to nutrition therapy, counseling, education, management, and leadership. Students will individually be assigned to one or more rotations and will acquire a unique learning experience within this course. Each rotation will include a main preceptor and setting location. Preceptors will lead learning experiences and activities that align with professional competencies and practice.

Performance Nutrition & Dietetics Supervised Experience Level 4 (PNDI 714; 1 credit) – Upper-level supervised experience in the field of nutrition and dietetics with an emphasis on nutrition therapy, services, and management in therapeutic and performance settings. Prerequisites: B or better in PNDI 710, PNDI 730, and PNDI 770.

The Performance Nutrition & Dietetics Supervised Experience Level 4 (PND SE 4) is the fourth of a series of SE courses that provide students the opportunities to achieve professional competencies while engaging in learning activities that increase their understanding of professional practice in multiple facets of the discipline. PND SE 4 consists of progressive rotations in advanced professional settings under the supervision and guidance of professional preceptors. Students will apply knowledge and experience previously acquired in the program while engaging in professional activities related but not limited to performance nutrition, nutrition interventions, management, and leadership. Students will individually be assigned to one or more rotations and will acquire a unique learning experience within this course. Each rotation will include a main preceptor and setting location. Preceptors will lead learning experiences and activities that align with professional competencies and practice.

Performance Nutrition & Dietetics Supervised Experience Level 5 (PNDI 715; 1 credit) - Final supervised experience with preceptors in advanced therapeutic and managerial settings within the field of nutrition and dietetics. Prerequisites: B or better in PNDI 730, PNDI 740, PNDI 750, PNDI 760, and PNDI 770.

The Performance Nutrition & Dietetics Supervised Experience Level 5 (PND SE 5) is the final course of a series of SE courses that provide students the opportunities to achieve professional competencies while engaging in learning activities that increase their understanding of professional practice in multiple

facets of the discipline. PND SE 5 consists of advanced rotations in therapeutic and managerial settings under the supervision and guidance of professional preceptors. Students will apply knowledge and experience previously acquired in the program while engaging in professional activities related to advanced nutrition therapy, organization management, and leadership. Students will individually be assigned to one or more rotations and will acquire a unique learning experience within this course. Each rotation will include a main preceptor and setting location. Preceptors will lead learning experiences and activities that align with professional competencies and practice.

Nutrition Counseling & Education (PNDI 730; 3 credits) – Educational and counseling components of nutrition interventions within nutrition care plans. Both psychological counseling and educational pedagogy will be emphasized. Prerequisites: B or better in PNDI 620 or HPEB 620; B or better in PNDI 700.

This course provides the opportunity for students to learn the educational and counseling components of nutrition interventions. Both psychological counseling and educational pedagogy will be emphasized. Students will learn about effective counseling relationships, behavioral change models, basic counseling responses, and the application of advanced counseling techniques. This course will cover the nutrition counseling protocols and flow of counseling sessions, goal setting, designing plan of actions, facilitating self-management, and utilizing nutrition informatics. Students will learn about assessing readiness to learn and educational practices during counseling. Cultural awareness and competence as well as cross cultural counseling will be emphasized throughout the course. This course is restricted to and required for students within the M.S. in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics program.

Medical Nutrition Therapy II (PNDI 740; 3 credits) – Application of nutrition and dietary interventions in illness and disease management using the principles of medical nutrition therapy and the Nutrition Care Process. Students will learn individualized nutrition care planning for patients with complex medical conditions. Prerequisite: B or better in PNDI 710.

This course is the second of a two-course series designed to provide the skills and knowledge necessary for the application of medical nutrition therapy in the prevention, management, and treatment of nutritionally related health conditions. The focal component will be the utilization of the Nutrition Care Process and ADIME model to manage complex disease conditions and/or improve the quality of life. Complex case studies including multiple diagnoses, barriers, and treatments will be utilized in the coursework to provide students the opportunity to apply critical thinking and communication skills at an advanced level and prepare them for future learning experiences in professional settings. Students will learn about the application of foundational scientific knowledge, pharmacology, pathophysiology, and within individualized nutrition care plans. This course is restricted to and required for students within the M.S. in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics program.

Performance Nutrition Therapy (PNDI 750; 3 credits) – Intersection of performance nutrition and medical nutrition therapy in which students learn to provide performance nutrition services to performers, athletes, teams, and athletic organizations. Prerequisites: B or better in PNDI 701, PNDI 710, and PNDI 730.

This course focuses on the intersection of performance nutrition and medical nutrition therapy. Students will learn the essential components of providing tailored nutrition care plans to recreational and competitive athletes/performers with nutritionally related health conditions and considerations. Students will gain exposure to the role of performance registered dietitian nutritionists in providing performance nutrition services including nutrition counseling, nutrition education, and food systems

management. Students will also learn about billing and reimbursement for performance nutrition services. This course is required for and restricted to students within the M.S. in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics program.

Nutrition & Public Health (PNDI 752; 3 credits) – A study of the relationship of human nutrition to public health and the potential for risk reduction through health education. Prerequisite: C or better in HPEB 502 or equivalent.

This course focuses on human nutrition through the lens of public health. We will examine nutrition policies and programs as well as the potential for risk reduction through health promotion and education. Class material will be drawn from the course textbook as well as relevant literature from the field. This course will employ a seminar format in which open discussion is required. Over the semester we will examine nutrition-related diseases, public health and social theory, how different public health fields approach nutrition, and examples from the field of nutrition programs and policies cross-culturally, with an emphasis on the U.S. Cross-listed with HPEB 752.

Leadership & Practice in Performance Nutrition & Dietetics (PNDI 760; 3 credits) – Students will learn to apply leadership, management, and business principles to guide practice in the field of nutrition and dietetics. Prerequisites: B or better in PNDI 620 or HPEB 620; B or better in PNDI 700; B or better in PNDI 701; B or better in PNDI 752 or HPEB 752

In this course, students will learn leadership principles and skills that can be applied to professional practice in performance nutrition and dietetics. Students will learn about leadership assessments, styles, principles, and applications in practice. Professional ethics; professional and environmental sustainability; organizational management; project management; risk management; time management; and quality and performance improvement are covered in this course. Students will learn about advocacy and policy in dietetics practice; as well as payment for and promotion of nutrition services. Students will learn about the application of leadership and management skills in various professional settings including performance, clinical, community, research, and dietetics education settings.

Food Systems Management (PNDI 770; 3 credits) – The application of food systems principles and management skills to ensure safe delivery of nutritious food.

In this course, students will learn about the application of food systems principles and management skills to ensure safe delivery of nutritious food. The basic functions of foodservice management including planning, organizing, directing, controlling, and staffing are included in this course as well as human resource management, financial management, marketing and public relations, quality management, and regulatory compliance. Students will learn about topics such as menu development, sensory evaluation; food procurement, production, distribution, and service; sanitation and safety; and equipment and facility planning. Ethical and professional decision making and communication skills are incorporated throughout the course.

Performance Nutrition & Dietetics Capstone (PNDI 780; 3 credits) – Students will summarize the ways in which they are becoming professionally competent in the discipline of nutrition and dietetics. Prerequisite: Instructor Permission

In this course, students will engage in self-assessment of progress toward professional competency using the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) professional competencies and performance indicators. Students will also familiarize themselves with the Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) Exam developed by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) including

registration, process, content, and study practices. State licensing and continuing education requirements will be covered in this course as students will learn about maintaining competency throughout their careers. This course is restricted to and required for students of the M.S. in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics program.

Total Credit Hours Required: 44

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

Similar Programs in South Carolina offered by Public and Independent Institutions

Identify the similar programs offered and describe the similarities and differences for each program.

Program Name and Designation	Total Credit Hours	Institution	Similarities	Differences
MS in Human Nutrition and Dietetic Internship Program	42	Winthrop University	<p>ACEND accreditation</p> <p>Graduates eligible for RDN exam</p>	<p>Only allows ACEND-accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) graduates to apply.</p> <p>Does not follow ACEND’s Future Education Model, a competency-based education model.</p> <p>Does not cover all didactic competencies.</p> <p>Maintains traditional dietetic education model and has a clinical nutrition emphasis.</p>
Dietetic Internship Certificate Program	18	Lenoir Rhyne University	<p>ACEND accreditation</p> <p>Graduates with a graduate degree are eligible for RDN exam</p>	<p>Not degree granting</p> <p>Supervised experience only</p> <p>No didactic curriculum</p> <p>Only allows ACEND-accredited DPD graduates to apply.</p> <p>Does not follow ACEND’s Future Education Model</p> <p>Maintains traditional dietetics curriculum.</p>

M.S. in Nutrition & Dietetic Internship	35	Lenoir Rhyne University	<p>ACEND accreditation</p> <p>Graduates earn a graduate degree and are eligible for RDN exam</p> <p>Includes a sports nutrition course (elective)</p>	<p>Only allows ACEND-accredited DPD graduates to apply.</p> <p>Does not follow ACEND's Future Education Model.</p> <p>Maintains traditional dietetics curriculum.</p>
M.S. in Food, Nutrition, and Culinary Sciences	30	Clemson University	<p>Includes didactic courses in Human Nutrition.</p> <p>Graduate degree granting</p> <p>A B.S. in Food, Nutrition, or Packaging related discipline is desirable, but not required of applicants.</p>	<p>Specializations in: Food Microbiology, Food Chemistry, Food Product Development, Food Engineering, Food Packaging, Packaging Materials, Packaging Design, Packaging Dynamics, Packaging Logistics</p> <p>Not an ACEND-accredited dietetics program. The graduates are not eligible for the RDN exam.</p>
M.S. in Nutritional Sciences	36	South Carolina State University	<p>Includes didactic curriculum courses in Human Nutrition.</p> <p>Graduate degree granting.</p>	<p>Two options: Nutritional Health Care or Food and Nutrition.</p> <p>Not an ACEND-accredited dietetics program. The graduates are not eligible for the RDN exam.</p> <p>The graduates will not be able to legally practice medical nutrition therapy in healthcare settings as registered and licensed dietitians (RDN, LDN), but may work for RDN, LDNs.</p>
B.S. in Food Science and Human Nutrition	125-128	Clemson University	ACEND accredited	Didactic component only, no supervised experience.

				Graduates are not eligible for the RDN exam. (They must complete another ACEND-accredited program with supervised experience and earn a graduate degree.)
B.S. in Nutrition and Food Management	130	South Carolina State University	ACEND accredited	<p>Didactic component only, no supervised experience.</p> <p>Graduates are not eligible for the RDN exam. (They must complete another ACEND-accredited program with supervised experience and earn a graduate degree.)</p>
B.S. in Nutrition – Dietetics	112-130	Winthrop University	ACEND accredited	<p>Didactic component only, no supervised experience.</p> <p>Graduates are not eligible for the RDN exam. (They must complete another ACEND-accredited program with supervised experience and earn a graduate degree.)</p>

As noted earlier, there are three ACEND accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics bachelor's programs in the state - at Clemson University, South Carolina State University and Winthrop University – and the traditional dietetic education model consists of a bachelor's degree in dietetics, a 6-to-12-month dietetic internship, and a two-year master's degree in any field.

Faculty

Rank and Full- or Part-time	Courses Taught for the Program	Academic Degrees and Coursework Relevant to Courses Taught, Including Institution and Major	Other Qualifications and Relevant Professional Experience (e.g., licensures, certifications, years in industry, etc.)
Program Director – FT	PNDI 700 Applied Nutrition Research PNDI 705 Performance Nutrition: Approaches & Advocacy PNDI 760 Leadership & Practice in PND PNDI 780 PND Capstone	Minimum of master’s degree in nutrition or tangential field Teaching experience in Nutrition, Health, &/or Exercise Sciences	RD/RDN credential with professional experience (5 years for master’s level; 3 years for PhD level)
Program Coordinator -FT	PNDI 711-715 PND SE Levels 1-5	Minimum of master’s degree in nutrition or tangential field Teaching/mentoring experience in nutrition and dietetics	RD/RDN credential with professional experience
FT Faculty	PNDI 701 Performance Nutrition	PhD in Human Movement Science, MA in Exercise Physiology 5+ years teaching, research, and professional experience in sports/performance nutrition.	5+ years professional experience with performance nutrition in healthy population
FT Faculty	PNDI 620 Nutrition Through the Life Cycle PNDI 752 Nutrition & Public Health	PhD in Community Nutrition 10+ years teaching life cycle and public health nutrition courses.	RD/RDN credential with 10+ years of professional experience in community nutrition/nutrition services Director of the USC Nutrition Consortium 10+ years advising students and dietetic interns
PT Clinical Instructor	PNDI 710 Medical Nutrition Therapy I	Graduate degree in Nutritional Sciences or related degree	RD/RDN credential with 2+ years of professional experience practicing

	PNDI 740 Medical Nutrition Therapy II		medical nutrition therapy in clinical settings
PT Clinical Instructor	PNDI 730 Nutrition Counseling & Education	Graduate degree in Nutritional Sciences or related degree	RD/RDN credential with 2+ years of professional experience practicing nutrition counseling & nutrition education
PT Clinical Instructor	PNDI 750 Performance Nutrition Therapy	Graduate degree in Nutritional Sciences or related degree	RD/RDN credential with 2+ years of professional experience practicing performance nutrition and medical nutrition therapy. Preferred: Certification(s) related to performance nutrition (e.g., CISSN, CSCS, CSSD, etc.)
PT Faculty Clinical Instructor	PNDI 770 Food Systems Management	EdD in Organizational Leadership B.S. in Hotel, Restaurant, and Tourism 15+ years teaching experience in food service, food systems management, food safety, culinary arts, and related courses	CCE – Certified Content Expert CEC – Certified Executive Chef ServSafe, ProStart, ManageFirst certifications 20+ years professional experience in food systems management

Total FTE needed to support the proposed program: 4
Faculty: 8 (1.5 FTE)
Staff: 1 (0.5 FTE) – shared with Department of Exercise Science
Administration: 2 FTE

Faculty, Staff, and Administrative Personnel

Discuss the Faculty, Staff, and Administrative Personnel needs of the program.

Overall, the program director, program coordinator, and three new part-time clinical instructors will need to be hired. The faculty line development and recruitment process will occur upon program approval in March or April of 2025. The full-time positions will be hired in the summer of 2025.

Program Director: A 12-month, full-time, clinical-track faculty member will serve as the program director for the M.S. in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics program. The program director will direct all aspects of the program; promote and advocate for the program; provide program orientations/trainings; collect and analyze program-related and student performance data; manage program evaluation and program improvement plans; manage program accreditation; chair the program committees and Advisory Board; distribute verification statements; advise; teach; and mentor. The program director must hold a graduate degree in nutrition and/or related field and a credential as a registered dietitian or registered dietitian nutritionist (RD/RDN). Professional experience as an RD/RDN is required with a minimum of 3 years for those with a doctoral degree and 5 years for those with a master’s degree. The program

director must be involved with and have experience in performance nutrition. The program director will oversee and manage all aspects of program management and the students' educational experience.

Program Coordinator: A 12-month, full-time, clinical track faculty member will serve as a program coordinator to assist with program management, namely in the coordination and teaching of supervised experiences. The program coordinator will assist with the day-to-day management of the program, processing student paperwork, answering program-related questions, coordinating prospective student visits, lifting advisement holds, maintaining student records, etc. The program coordinator must hold a graduate degree and be credentialed as a RD/RDN. Professional/teaching/mentoring experience is preferred.

Course Instructors: A total of 8 faculty members will teach courses within the program including the program director and coordinator mentioned above. Two full-time faculty members of the Arnold School of Public Health will be teaching a total of three courses within the program. All four other instructors (three of which are new) will be part-time faculty members with expertise that aligns with their teaching assignments. For example, the Medical Nutrition Therapy I & II, Nutrition Counseling & Education, and Performance Nutrition Therapy courses will be taught by practicing professionals with a propensity to teach.

Resources

Library and Learning Resources

Explain how current library/learning collections, databases, resources, and services specific to the discipline, including those provided by PASCAL, can support the proposed program. Identify additional library resources needed.

Students enrolled at the University of South Carolina have access to a wide variety of information sources including print books, ebooks, databases, dissertations and theses, newspapers, journal articles, video, and government information. The USC Library is a member of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and the statewide library consortium PASCAL. PASCAL membership includes access to two of the largest ebook collections, EBSCO's Academic Ebook collection and ProQuest's Ebook Central.

The library has access to more than 200 databases including the primary databases in the field of nutrition and exercise science. USC students and faculty have access to the library's Interlibrary Loan services. The library has borrowing/lending relationships with most of the libraries in North America and relationships with several research libraries throughout the world.

The databases within the USC library system that are specific to the program include:

- Academic Search Complete
- Access Medicine
- Annual Reviews
- Biological Science Collection
- CINAHL Complete
- Cochrane Library
- Counseling and Therapy in Video
- Dissertations and Theses Global
- Embase
- Google Scholar
- Health and Psychosocial Instruments (HAPI)
- Health Poll Database
- Health Source: Nursing/Academic Edition

- Joanna Briggs Institute Evidence-Based Practice
- Medical Books at Ovid
- Medline (Ovid)
- Merck Index Online
- Micromedex
- Nursing and Allied Health
- Ovid Journals
- PolicyMap
- PsychiatryOnline
- PsychINFO
- PsycTESTS
- PubMed-Medline
- Sage Business Cases
- ScienceDirect
- SPORTDiscus
- Sports Medicine and Education Index
- Statista
- TOXLINE
- USP-NF Online (United States Pharmacopeia, National Formulary)
- Web of Science Core Collection

The USC library provides access to 217 journals within the category of [“Diet & Clinical Nutrition”](#). Students within the MS/PND program will be able to utilize the USC library resources to gain access to various subject-specific publications from peer-reviewed journals including, but not limited to:

- British Journal of Nutrition
- Clinical Nutrition
- Dietetics
- European Journal of Nutrition
- Food Chemistry
- Nutrients
- The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition
- Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
- The Journal of Nutrition
- Journal of the International Society of Sports Nutrition
- Journal of Medical Nutrition and Nutraceuticals
- Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior
- Journal of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition
- Journal of Nutrigenetics and Nutrigenomics
- Obesity
- Nutrition
- Nutrition in Clinical Practice
- Nutrition and Dietetics
- International Journal of Obesity
- Public Health Nutrition

The need to procure additional collections will be identified and requested if the student and faculty needs are not being met on a routine basis. Due to the robust nature of the library collections, these requests are anticipated to be rare and infrequent.

Beyond the collections, students have access to computers and iPads to support their research needs. Individual study spaces are available for quiet learning and group study spaces are available to support the collaborative process. These resources are all in place for the Exercise Science degree programs and will remain in place for the MS in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics.

Students within the program will take advantage of the following USC Libraries resources:

- Instruction and Outreach Librarians – to obtain assistance finding and utilizing resources.
- Open Access – to openly share and obtain research evidence within the community.
- Thomas Cooper Library – as the main campus library
- Graduate Study Space – to study and work in a quiet, reserved space.
- SHARPGads Workshop – to learn about research tools/resources, publishing in scholarly journals, and research data management.

- [Digital Collections](#) - to access collections such as *Hunger in America*, *Menu Project*, *South Carolinian Cookbook Collection*, *United States Food Administration Food Conservation Notes*, *Government Information USDA Periodicals*
- Scholar Commons
- Digital Research Services – to assist with research learning assessments and projects.

Student Support Services

Explain how current academic support services will support the proposed program. Identify new services needed and provide any estimated costs associated with these services.

Students will have access to all academic support services. Like all graduate students within the university, students will have the opportunity to utilize these resources to enhance their academic well-being and success throughout their educational experience within the program. The current program design includes promotion and utilization of the following student support services at USC:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Division of Information Technology at USC – for IT support services through the self-service portal and Carolina Tech Zone • Student Disabilities Services • Student Life services • University Health Services • University Health Services – Counseling & Psychiatry Department • Campus Recreation Facilities • Student Affairs and Academic Support • Leadership and Service Center | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduate Student Association • Graduate Student Resource Hub • My USC Experience – student-related engagements and activities • USC Writing Center • Ombuds • Opportunities Bulletin Board • Veteran Services • International Student Services • Professional Development • Travel Grants • Scholarly Initiatives |
|--|---|

No new support services will be needed for the M.S. in Performance Nutrition and Dietetics. The Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support at USC is designed to provide comprehensive resources to support students' academic achievement. These include support services through the Student Disability Resources Center, Ombuds Services, Peer Tutoring, Peer Writing Support, Success Consultations, Student Conduct, Academic Integrity Office, and Supplemental Instruction.

Physical Resources/Facilities

Identify the physical facilities needed to support the program and the institution's plan for meeting the requirements.

No new facilities are needed to support the program. The program was designed with full intention to utilize the wide array of existing and available facilities for student learning. The program will be housed within the Department of Exercise Science located in the Public Health Research Center and the Blatt Physical Education Center on the USC Columbia main campus. Students within this program will be able to complete simulated learning experiences in courses such as PNDI 710 Medical Nutrition Therapy I, PNDI 730 Nutrition Counseling & Education, and PNDI 740 Medical Nutrition Therapy II at the [Center for Simulation and Experiential Learning \(SAEL\)](#) facility in the College of Nursing at the Lexington Medical Center site. In this facility, the program students will be using simulation software, manikins, standardized patients, and equipment. The SAEL is a clinical teaching environment accredited by the

Society for Simulation in Healthcare. It includes a hospital-like setting with high-fidelity manikins, a nursing simulation center, eight hospital/clinical suites, six exam rooms, and a classroom area all equipped with audio/visual tools. Recordings of live simulations can be viewed anywhere on campus for evaluation, review, and/or debriefing.

As part of the PNDI 770 Food Systems Management and PNDI 712 & 714 Supervised Experience courses, the prospective students will engage in enriching food production, food service, and food management experiences at the [McCutchen House](#) and the J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation Culinary Laboratory in the College of Hospitality, Retail, and Sports Management as well as the USC Athletics Food & Beverage Services at the Dodie Academic Enrichment Center. The [McCutchen House](#) is a student-run full-service restaurant on the main USC campus in Columbia (902 Sumter St.) in a historic, three-story building on the USC Horseshoe and includes a teaching kitchen, production kitchen, instructional spaces, dining rooms, and event spaces. The McCutchen House is operated by the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management as a venue for dining, culinary classes, and special events. Under the supervision of the director and professional chefs, students in the PND program will work at the McCutchen House with Hospitality, Restaurant, and Sports Management students to obtain hands-on experience with foodservice and food systems management.

[The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation Culinary Laboratory](#), located in the Close-Hipp building, is a 2,000-square foot state-of-the-art commercial kitchen and technology-enhanced classroom within the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management. This facility supports a range of curriculum such as food production, nutrition, and food service with a focus on preparing students to manage teams of culinary professionals. Students will gain knowledge in commercial kitchen operations, culinary trends and best practices, menu-planning, inventory management, and various aspects of food systems management. The Marriott Lab hosts various events and classes that are also open to the public including tastings, fundraising events, and culinary demonstrations making it valuable to the PND students and the greater community.

The [Dodie Anderson Academic Center](#) houses a 2,000 square foot, full-service kitchen with a 2,650 square foot dining room with seating for 200 along with a 1,300 square foot food service area to provide food services to USC athletes. The kitchen is equipped with two combi-ovens, one steam-jacketed kettle, an oven, two ranges, a chargrill, and fryers as well as a walk-in cooler and walk-in deep freezer. The dining hall is equipped with a hot buffet line, salad bar, nacho/tot bar, and a lean station. The food service area is a satellite operation that hosts a grab-and-go snack station. PND students will work with the Director of USC Athletics Food & Beverage Services and professional chefs to further their educational experience in actualizing performance nutrition services.

The [Center for Health and Well-Being](#) at the main USC campus in Columbia is another one of the nutrition therapy rotation facilities in which PND students will engage in supervised experience with nutrition care services. Students will engage in learning activities with the lead dietitian within the nutrition offices on the first floor and the demonstration kitchen on the second floor serving the university-student population.

The supervised experience courses (PNDI 711-715) will take place in various professional facilities (e.g., outpatient clinics, school district centers, nutrition service offices, etc.) which have agreed to host the students of the program. Affiliation Memorandum of Agreements will be maintained by the program director as they are developed.

Office Space:

No new office space is needed. The program director and program coordinator will maintain offices in which they can complete work and hold office hours. The program director's and coordinator's office will be in the Public Health Research Center building in rooms 227 and 230, respectively.

Equipment

Identify new instructional equipment needed for the proposed program.

The PND program will require competency tracking software to track student performance in progressing toward achievement of the 165+ professional competencies and performance indicators at the desired performance level throughout the program curriculum. This software will enable program director, instructors, advisors, preceptors, and students to continually provide student performance data to be utilized in individual, cohort, and program evaluations. This software will manage the program and student performance data required for ACEND reports including cross-sectional and longitudinal data analysis. Competency tracking software provides a method of communication between the program director, program faculty, community preceptors, and the students. There are a variety of software packages available to select from including but not limited to:

- [EMS Competency.AI](#) – partnered with ACEND.
- [PRISM](#) – Preceptor, Instructor, Student Management software from UNC Chapel Hill that is specifically designed for dietetic programs.
- [Typhon](#) – customizable student tracking software familiar with nutrition and dietetics.
- [CORE CompMS](#) – personalized student competency assessment software utilized in other allied health programs.

We are currently evaluating these options and a package will be in place by the start of the program.

Beyond the equipment mentioned in the above facilities, the PND program will require nutrition-specific equipment that will be incorporated repeatedly within the program curriculum and held within appropriate office storage space in the Blatt Physical Education Building under the management of the program director. This equipment will include:

- Anthropometric assessment tools
 - Soft tape measures
 - Skinfold calipers
 - Medical scales
 - Bioelectrical impedance scales
- Biochemical assessment tools
 - Lancets and sharps containers
 - Blood glucose monitors and test strips
 - Continuous glucose monitors and software
 - Ketone monitors and test strips
 - Microbiome testing kits and software (e.g., Zoe)
 - Nutrigenetic testing kits and software (e.g., 3x4 genetics, DNAfit, Genopalate, etc.)
- Clinical assessment tools/procedure supplies:
 - Stethoscopes
 - Sphygmomanometers/BP monitors

- Nasogastric tubing (ultrathin)
- Medical tape
- Plastic basins
- pH test strips
- Medical gloves
- Cleansing agents
- Nutrition care tools:
 - Injection training kits (subcutaneous saline)
 - Diabetes Skills training kits
 - Insulin pumps and saline vial inserts
 - Nutrition care software (e.g., Nutrium, Computrition, Foodworks, etc.)
- Nutrition management software (e.g., PointClickCare, MatrixCare)

The program fees can be assigned to cover the cost of these and related supplies, which are figured into the “Facilities, Equipment, Supplies, and Materials” line items in the *Financial Support* table below.

Impact on Existing Programs

Will the proposed program impact existing degree programs or services at the institution (e.g., course offerings or enrollment)? If yes, explain.

Yes

No

Financial Support

Sources of Financing for the Program by Year												
Category	2025 - 1 st		2 nd		3 rd		4 th		5 th		Grand Total	
	New	Total	New	Total	New	Total	New	Total	New	Total	New	Total
Tuition Funding	\$80,070.00	\$80,070.00	\$202,098.00	\$202,098.00	\$270,126.00	\$270,126.00	\$322,140.00	\$322,140.00	\$372,168.00	\$372,168.00	\$1,246,602.00	\$1,246,602.00
Program-Specific Fees	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$12,000.00	\$12,000.00	\$16,000.00	\$16,000.00	\$19,000.00	\$19,000.00	\$22,000.00	\$22,000.00	\$74,000.00	\$74,000.00
Special State Appropriation	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Reallocation of Existing Funds	\$120,000.00	\$120,000.00	\$120,000.00	\$120,000.00	\$121,200.00	\$121,200.00	\$121,800.00	\$121,800.00	\$121,800.00	\$121,800.00	\$604,800.00	\$604,800.00
Federal, Grant, or Other Funding	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$205,070.00	\$205,070.00	\$334,098.00	\$334,098.00	\$407,326.00	\$407,326.00	\$462,940.00	\$462,940.00	\$515,968.00	\$515,968.00	\$1,925,402.00	\$1,925,402.00
Estimated Costs Associated with Implementing the Program by Year												
Category	1 st		2 nd		3 rd		4 th		5 th		Grand Total	
	New	Total	New	Total	New	Total	New	Total	New	Total	New	Total
Program Administration and Faculty/Staff Salaries	\$254,000.00	\$254,000.00	\$269,000.00	\$269,500.00	\$272,195.00	\$272,195.00	\$276,277.93	\$276,277.93	\$280,422.10	\$280,422.10	\$1,351,895.02	\$1,351,895.02
Facilities, Equipment, Supplies, and Materials	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$13,000.00	\$13,000.00
Library Resources	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other- Accreditation & site visit	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$11,000.00	\$11,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$23,000.00	\$23,000.00
Other - Recruitment/Marketing	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00
Other – USC Support	\$13,611.90	\$13,611.90	\$34,356.66	\$34,356.66	\$45,921.42	\$45,921.42	\$54,763.80	\$54,763.80	\$63,268.56	\$63,268.56	\$211,922.34	\$211,922.34

Total	\$280,611.9 0	\$280,611.9 0	\$313,356. 66	\$313,856. 66	\$336,116. 42	\$336,116. 42	\$341,041. 73	\$341,041. 73	\$353,690. 66	\$353,690. 66	\$1,624,817. 36	\$1,624,817. 36
Net Total (Sources of Financing Minus Estimated Costs)	\$(75,541.9 0)	\$(75,541.9 0)	\$20,741.3 4	\$20,241.3 4	\$71,209.5 8	\$71,209.5 8	\$121,898. 28	\$121,898. 28	\$162,277. 34	\$162,277. 34	\$300,584.64	\$300,584.64

Note: New costs - costs incurred solely as a result of implementing this program. Total costs - new costs; program's share of costs of existing resources used to support the program; and any other costs redirected to the program.

Budget Justification

Provide an explanation for all costs and sources of financing identified in the Financial Support table. Include an analysis of cost-effectiveness and return on investment and address any impacts to tuition, other programs, services, facilities, and the institution overall.

The table above depicts the estimated budget for the first five years of the program initiation. Tuition funding was calculated using the 2023-24 in-state, full-time graduate student rate published on the USC Bursar’s Office website with an estimated 5 students in the first year, total of 12 by the second year, and a total of 16 students in year 3. With the increase in size of each cohort, a positive return on investment is anticipated to begin in year 3 of the 5-year start-up phase.

Two full-time and five part-time faculty members are included in the estimated salary costs along with a 2.4% cost of living adjustment each year. The “Facilities, Equipment, Supplies, and Materials” line item includes the estimated costs required for the acquisition and maintenance of the list of educational support materials mentioned above. ACEND accreditation renewal (\$3,000/year) and site visitation (\$11,000) fees are included in the estimated “other” costs alongside the recruitment/marketing costs (\$5,000/year). The recruitment and marketing budget will support the program director’s efforts to expand the program not only by increasing the applicant pool but by recruiting/maintaining preceptors. Preceptors are professionals within the field that volunteer to provide supervised learning experiences to the program students. Strong stewardship of the preceptor network is crucial to the growth and maintenance of the program. Affiliation agreements between the supervised experience site/facility and the MS/PND program will be reviewed by USC General Counsel; signed by the MS/PND program director, the Secretary of the USC Board of Trustees, and facility liaison; and distributed amongst signatories prior to student rotations. The program coordinator will manage and maintain these agreements under supervision of the program director.

Evaluation and Assessment

Program Goals	Objectives Aligned to Program Goals	Methods of Assessment
<p>Program graduates will have strong feelings of occupational self-efficacy in their ability to practice as an entry-level registered dietitian nutritionist.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At least 80% of program graduates complete program/degree requirements within 3 years (150% of the program length). 2. At least 80% percent of program graduates take the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists within 12 months of program completion. 3. 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 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The program director will utilize graduate records data to compare the date of program initiation to date of completion for each graduate to determine time to completion on annual basis in May-June after the first cohort graduates in 2027. 2. The program director will determine the eligibility and timing of completion of the RDN exam for each graduate on an annual basis each June using data from the CDR REPS system, alumni surveys, Pearson Pass Rate Reports, and communication with graduates.

	entry-level registered dietitian nutritionist as average or above.	3. The program director will review self-efficacy ratings of graduates using data from the alumni surveys annually each June beginning in the summer of 2028.
Program graduates will be competent, entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists in a variety of practice settings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 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%. 2. Of graduates who seek employment, at least 80% percent are employed in nutrition and dietetics or related fields within 12 months of graduation. 3. At least 80% of employers who complete a survey on program graduates report that the graduate meets their expectations for professional competency at an "average" level or above. 4. At least 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. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Every six months, the program director will use data from the Pearson Pass Rate reports (published June/July and Dec/Jan) to determine the percentage of graduates that pass the RDN exam within one-year of graduation. 2. Annually in June, the program director will evaluate employment data from the alumni surveys (provided at 6- and 12-months post-graduation) to determine the rate of employment in the field. 3. Annually in June, the program director will evaluate data from the MS/PND Graduate Employer Survey to evaluate employer ratings of MS/PND graduate employee on professional competence.
Program graduates will apply nutrition care in unique and innovative ways to promote improvement of health and human performance.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 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. 2. 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. 3. 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. 	<p>Annually each summer, the program director will evaluate data from the Alumni Survey to evaluate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the rating of frequency of promoting health and human performance in their professional practice. 2. the examples of unique and innovative nutrition care applied in professional practice. 3. the rate of engagement of graduates in professional advocacy.

Explain how the proposed program, including all program objectives, will be evaluated, along with plans to track employment. Describe how assessment data will be used.

Upon completion of the program, graduates will combine traditional nutrition care practices with performance nutrition practices to provide unique and innovative nutrition services that optimize health and human performance. Achievement of these goals will ensure that graduates are meeting subjective (program goal 1) and objective (program goals 2 and 3) measures of the mission statement.

The first three objectives (under the first goal) involve the duration of time to complete the program, the act of taking the credentialing exam, and feelings of confidence in readiness to practice. It is in the interest of the students to obtain a high-quality education in the most efficient manner possible to avoid unnecessary expenditure of time, effort, and cost. A two-year structure is designed for the full-time student, yet unexpected delays may lead to an intermittent schedule, hence the 150% timeframe requirement mentioned in the first objective.

The program is designed to prepare graduates to become registered dietitian nutritionists with expertise in performance nutrition by providing opportunities to obtain the necessary knowledge and skills through didactic curriculum and supervised experiences. The first goal includes providing this education in a manner that makes the graduates feel self-efficacious in their ability to begin practicing. Evidence of this occupational self-efficacy will be found in the feedback within alumni surveys and in the timeframe in which graduates decide to take the RDN exam.

The objectives under the second goal lend to the interests of both the graduates and the public. By passing the RDN exam and obtaining employment in the field, graduates will succeed in their short-term goals and contribute to the fields of nutrition and human performance all while the public gains competent, multifaceted registered dietitian nutritionists that contribute to their health and wellness in a comprehensive manner.

The objectives under the third goal focus on the professional application of nutrition care in unique and innovative ways that promote health and human performance as this can apply to all humans across a spectrum of health and performance levels. The first objective under the third goal emphasizes the high frequency in which PND graduates will apply their performance nutrition knowledge and skill to their professional practice. The second objective emphasizes the graduates' role in advocating for the recognition and utilization of performance RDNs.

Analysis of the achievement of the Program Goals and Objectives will take place on an annual basis utilizing the USC PND Program Evaluation Plan. The Program Evaluation Plan provides details regarding the data, data collection methods, timeline, and individuals responsible for collecting the data. The program director will be responsible for ensuring the necessary data is collected and analyzed within the projected timeline.

The program start date will be in the Fall of 2025 and the first class of students are projected to graduate in the Spring of 2027. The annual review of data will begin in the summer of 2028 with a follow-up in Spring 2028 as needed for graduates requiring greater than 100% of the program length. For example, to assess whether 80% of the first class completed the program within 150% of the designated timeframe, graduation record data will be collected at the end of each semester (beginning at the end of Spring of 2027) and analyzed annually in June (beginning June of 2028).

The data to be collected includes graduation dates and program completion timelines, CDR credentialing exam attempts and pass rates, alumni survey data, and graduate employer survey data. This data will be collected from the USC Registrar's Office, from communication with graduates as well as graduate surveys, Pearson VUE, and graduate employer surveys. The program director will manage the data and data collection methods. The program director will use this data to evaluate the achievement of the program goals and objectives.

The stakeholders involved in the annual review process will include the program director, program faculty members, the department chair, and the members of the program advisory board. The program director will share the results of the Program Evaluation Plan with these stakeholders annually. FERPA regulations will be upheld to protect student privacy. No personally identifiable information from education records will be disclosed to non-faculty members during this review process or any other program effort.

The analysis of the data collected within the Program Evaluation Plan will be incorporated into the Continuous Program Improvement Plan (CPIP). Strengths and weaknesses within the program infrastructure and content as well as the strategies and progress of addressing and/or maintaining these aspects will also be documented within the CPIP and shared with the stakeholders on an annual basis each summer.

Accreditation and Licensure/Certification

Will the institution seek program-specific accreditation (e.g., CAEP, ABET, NASM, etc.)? If yes, describe the institution's plans to seek accreditation, including the expected timeline.

Yes

No

The program is seeking accreditation from the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics ([ACEND](#)). ACEND is the accrediting agency for education programs preparing students for careers as registered dietitian nutritionists. Please see the following for the accreditation application timeline:

- **August 2024:** Submit accreditation candidacy application.
- **November 2024:** ACEND Reviewer Site Visit
- **January 2025:** Receive Site Visit Report
- **January - February 2025:** Submit Response to Site Visit Report
- **July 2025:** Receive decision from the July ACEND Decision Board Meeting

Will the proposed program lead to licensure or certification? If yes, identify the licensure or certification.

Yes

No

The program will prepare and provide eligibility for all graduates to become Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDN) through the [Commission on Dietetic Registration](#) as well as Licensed Dietitian Nutritionist (LDN) state licensing from respective state boards (e.g., SC Labor Licensing Regulation <https://www.llr.sc.gov/diet/>) as needed.

Explain how the program will prepare students for this licensure or certification.

To be eligible to register for the national RDN credentialing exam, an individual must have earned a verification statement from an ACEND-accredited RDN program and a graduate degree. As an ACEND-accredited graduate program, the program would confer this eligibility as evidenced by a verification statement to all its graduates.

The program will prepare students for national registration and state licensure by complying with the accreditation standards of ACEND. This entails maintaining a program that provides an educational experience that enables students to obtain professional competence through achievement of performance indicators identified in the field. The combination of didactic coursework and supervised experiences, this program enables students to apply newly gained knowledge and skills in professional settings under the supervision of experts in the field. The cumulative learning experience in the PNDI 780 Performance Nutrition and Dietetics Capstone course not only enables students to evaluate their ability to achieve professional competency but prepares them to take the RDN credentialing exam and earn state licensure. The program goals include the RDN exam pass rate and therefore the credentialing rate of graduates will be a measure of program success.

If the program is an Educator Preparation Program, does the proposed certification area require national recognition from a Specialized Professional Association (SPA)? If yes, describe the institution's plans to seek national recognition, including the expected timeline.

Yes

No