



PRECEPTOR MANUAL

A preceptor is an expert or specialist, such as a Registered Dietitian, who provides practical experience and training to a dietetic intern.

As a preceptor you are invaluable to an intern's learning experience. You will be asked to:

- Participate in preceptor training (read preceptor manual), contact DI Director (emily.boldrin@unco.edu) or Program Coordination Specialist (brianna.bock@unco.edu) with questions, attend webinars and/or participate in a preceptor online training. There is an optional online dietetics preceptor training program through eatrightpro.org, which provides 8 free CPEUs.
- Permit interns to shadow and learn from you.
- Provide opportunities for the intern to practice what they have learned.
- Supervise the intern while they complete their rotation and competencies.
- Evaluate the intern's progress through verbal and written evaluations.
- Score and discuss Learning Activities.
- Sign off on hours completed with you.
- Communicate your needs with UNC faculty and staff.
- Be a positive role model.
- Facilitate a positive professional learning environment.

Evaluations and Progress Reports

Mid-and End-Rotation Progress Reports: Progress reports will be complete via an online form that will be emailed to the preceptor by the program. An End-Rotation Progress report is required for all rotations. Preceptors should complete this towards the end of the rotation. For rotations that last more than 80 hours, a Mid-Rotation Progress Report is also required. Every progress report should be reviewed together by the preceptor and intern.

Evaluation of Competencies and Learning Activities: Within the last 40 hours of the rotation, the Director will email the preceptor an online form. On it, is where preceptors will input the total number of hours completed, indicate if the intern completed their 40 hours of foodservice or clinical staff relief, and input scores for the competencies and Learning Activities. Every intern must score a 3 or greater for all competencies and Learning Activities. If an intern scores below a 3, they will be required to repeat that competency. UNC faculty/staff will work with the intern and the preceptor to determine the best course of action in this event.

Highlights of Expectations for Interns

Starting the Program: The dietetic internship program begins during the University of Northern Colorado summer session.

Orientation: An online orientation is mandatory for all interns. Orientation includes training on HIPPA, OSHA, professional dress, policies & procedures, and overall expectations.

Onboarding: Before starting the practice experience, interns must provide: verification of DPD completion, proof of medical and professional liability insurance, background check, drug screen, and immunization records. Interns are made aware that their rotation sites may request additional information.

Required Hours: Interns are required to complete a minimum of 1000 hours of supervised experience. Hours may be completed on a full-time or part-time basis. All students must submit a written plan at the start of the program with a proposed time schedule and anticipated completion date. This includes when and where specific learning experiences

will occur. These plans must be approved by the Program Director before an intern may start the practice of their program, and are subject to change at the Director's discretion.

Holiday Hours: Weeks that fall on holidays may contain fewer hours in proportion to the hours missed for the holiday. Observed holidays are those recognized by the sponsoring facility for their other employees. Holiday hours are **NOT** part of the 1000 required hours and schedules must be adjusted to make up the time.

Full-time interns: are expected to practice 32-40 hours per week and complete their practice program within 8-10 months. Any interruptions in a student's full-time program (such as a holiday time) should be included in their plan and approved by the DI Director and preceptor prior to initiation of the rotation. It is expected that all scheduling decisions will be made in close consultation with the Preceptor.

Part-time interns: are expected to practice 20-32 hours per week and must complete their supervised practice hours within 14 months following the start of their program. Time worked is expected to be arranged into blocks to allow continuity in the student learning experience.

Sick days: are not to be counted in the total number of hours practiced and *must be made up*; single sick days can be made up by arrangement of the student with the preceptor. The DI Director must be notified of multiple sick days.

Learning Activities: Students are expected to complete several Learning Activities outside of practice hours (for example: reading articles or preparing presentations). Hours spent on activities outside of the supervised practice are **NOT** considered part of the required 1000 practice hours. Instructions for the activities are located in the learning platform, Canvas, and will be sent by the intern for the preceptor to reference. Interns are required to follow directions and complete them as they apply to the rotation. Preceptors will score and discuss the activities with the intern. If a preceptor would like to alter a learning activity so that it better fits the needs of their facility, they must first receive approval from UNC faculty/staff.

Canvas: Canvas will be accessed by interns throughout the internship program and interns will share necessary information with preceptors. Canvas contains all tests, required documents, instructions for activities, course materials, resources for rotations, useful websites, etc. Interns have access to Canvas throughout their program and are expected to log in frequently.

Tests: All interns will take a pre-assessment and four domain tests. The domain tests are to be completed toward the end of each area of experience relating to the domains. Interns cannot graduate unless they complete and submit the domain tests. Tests are completed through Canvas. Preceptors are not responsible for scoring or reviewing these tests.

Assessment of Prior Learning: As of 2023, the DI participates in the Assessment of Prior Learning (APL) recognized by ACEND. Interns with previous experience in a dietetics or related field may apply to reduce the number of hours completed in the foodservice or the community rotation of their internship by a maximum of 220 hours. Applications will be reviewed by UNC faculty/staff, and require no action on the part of the preceptor.

Insurance requirements: Interns are **REQUIRED** to have health insurance and professional liability insurance while completing the UNC DI program. Interns are responsible for all medical expenses incurred during the internship. In addition to health and professional liability insurance, interns are required to have automobile insurance and assume own liability while traveling to and from internship practice experiences.

Reporting of Hours in Practice Experience: Interns are required to track their hours. They are required to complete a minimum of 300 hours in the clinical, community, and foodservice rotation and a minimum of 100 hours in the concentration area. Preceptors must sign off on hours completed at the end of the rotation.

Intern Evaluations: Interns evaluate every preceptor after each rotation. These evaluations are reviewed by DI faculty/staff.

Protection of Privacy Information and Access to personal files: The University maintains an educational record for each student who is or has been enrolled at the University. In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended (hereafter "Act"), the following student rights are covered by the Act and afforded to all eligible students at the University.

1. The right to inspect and review information contained in the student's educational records.
2. The right to request amendment of the contents of the student's educational records if believed to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights.

3. The right to prevent disclosure without consent, with certain exceptions, of personally identifiable information from the student's educational records.
4. The right to secure a copy of the University's policy.
5. The right to file complaints with the US Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the University to comply with the provisions of the Act.

Each of these rights, with any limitations or exemptions, is explained in the University's policy statement, a copy that may be obtained in the Registrar's Office.

Grievance Procedures

Students may appeal any academic decision they consider arbitrary, capricious, or contrary to University policy. It is the responsibility of the student to initiate the appeals procedure at all levels.

Step 1: Confer with the preceptor or instructor to discuss the problem.

Step 2: If the problem is not satisfactorily resolved with the preceptor or instructor, schedule a conference with the program director or school director.

Step 3: If the problem is still not resolved, the student should schedule a conference with the academic dean.

Step 4: If all attempts fail to solve the problem to the student's satisfaction, he/she should file a written request for a formal hearing before the UNC Academic Appeals Board. For a more detailed discussion of this process, the student is referred to the online UNC Student Handbook.

In the event that the above process does not satisfy a student's grievance, under certain circumstances a student may also appeal to the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND).

ACEND has established a process for reviewing complaints against accredited programs in order to fulfill its public responsibility for assuring the quality and integrity of the programs it accredits. Any individual, for example, student, faculty, dietetics practitioner or member of the public, may submit a complaint against any accredited program to ACEND. However, ACEND will not intervene on behalf of individuals as a court of appeal for individuals in matters of admissions, appointments, promotions, or dismissal of faculty or students. It will act only upon a signed allegation that the program may not be in compliance with the accreditation standards or policies.

A copy of the accreditation standards and / or the Council's policy and procedure for submission of complaints may be obtained by contacting the ACEND staff at the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000, Chicago, Illinois 60606-6995 or by calling 800/877-1600, ext. 5400.

Graduation and / or Program Completion requirements

Interns must successfully complete the orientation before continuing to the supervised practice part of their program. Interns must receive satisfactory reviews from their preceptor and from the program for all work. Failure to satisfactorily complete any portion of the curriculum will result in non-completion of the program.

In the event that a student does not satisfactorily complete learning experiences or receive a satisfactory evaluation from a preceptor, the UNC faculty and staff will consult with the student and their preceptors. Depending on the outcome, the DI Director may allow an opportunity for the student to repeat learning experiences.

Upon successful completion of ALL parts of the dietetic internship, including all learning experiences, satisfactory evaluations from preceptors and the DI Director, and confirmation of completion of a graduate degree, students will be given an ACEND Verification Statement demonstrating completion of the program and establishing eligibility to sit for the RDN exam.