

# CLINICAL NUTRITION, D.C.N.

## Contact

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## Mission

### Mission of the Doctor of Clinical Nutrition

The mission of the Doctor of Clinical Nutrition program is to prepare Registered Dietitian Nutritionists to be scholar-practitioners with advanced skills and competence to lead the integration of evidence-informed healthcare services, critical thinking, and/or research in professional settings.

## Accreditation

### Institutional Accreditation

All programs at the University of New England are accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE).

## Program Description

The Doctor of Clinical Nutrition (D.C.N.) is a professional practice doctorate that prepares Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDN) to competitively progress in their careers and excel in positions of advanced nutrition practice, practice-based research, and leadership in healthcare and academia. The D.C.N. integrates and applies critical thinking, nutrition practice, scholarship, leadership skills, and educational theory to practice. There is an emphasis on the provision of evidence-based nutrition services, scientific inquiry and research, adaptive and responsive leadership, higher education administration, advocacy and innovation, and interprofessional collaboration. Students engage in practice-based research throughout the program, and there are multiple opportunities for students to produce publication-worthy manuscripts.

The program culminates in students completing 320 hours of an advanced practice residency and a doctoral research project which are individualized to the student's professional goals.

## Transfer Credit

Upon acceptance, students may apply to transfer up to three courses (maximum of nine credits) into the Doctor of Clinical Nutrition program. To request consideration for transfer credit, a student must provide an official transcript and a course syllabus for each course. Transfer credit is awarded at the discretion of The College of Professional Studies based on specific program details listed below. Requests for approval of transfer credit should be submitted to and will be granted at the discretion of the Program Director.

Transfer courses must:

- Be classified as graduate level.
- Have been taken within five years of application.
- Have been completed with a grade of B or better.
- Be equivalent to one of the required program courses or an elective course that meets the goals of the student's education.

## Experiential Credit

The D.C.N. program does not grant academic credit for life experiences or previous work experience.

## Admissions

See Online Admissions (<https://catalog.une.edu/graduate/admissions/#onlineprogramstext>) for more information.

## Financial Information

### Tuition and Fees

Tuition and fees for subsequent years may vary. Other expenses include books and housing. Please consult this catalog's Financial Information (<https://catalog.une.edu/graduate/financial-information-graduate-programs/>) page for specific tuition and fees information.

## Curricular Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
<b>Program Required Courses</b>		
DCN 801	Nutrition Research Theory and Implementation	3
DCN 806	Nutrition Assessment and Therapy	3
DCN 810	Advanced Methods in Nutrition Research I	3
DCN 816	Nutrition Pharmacotherapy	3
DCN 820	Counseling and Health Behavior Change	3
DCN 825	Adaptive Leadership	3
DCN 830	Advanced Nutrition Practice	3
DCN 835	Healthcare Ecosystems and Management	3
DCN 840	Responsive Leadership in Practice	3
DCN 846	Food Justice and Advocacy	3
DCN 850	Advanced Topics in Health Professions Leadership I	3
DCN 856	Residency I	1
DCN 866	Research Practicum	1
DCN 870	Advanced Methods in Nutrition Research II	3
DCN 876	Residency II	1
DCN 880	Fundamentals of Manuscript Preparation	3
Two Focus Area electives (see below)		6
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>48</b>

## Focus Area Elective Options

Students are required to complete two courses (six credits) aligned with their DCN Focus Area and with approval of the program director to ensure appropriate placement in the plan of study. Eligible courses may be interprofessional (listed below) or any 800-level course with the DCN prefix.

Code	Title	Hours
Any 800-level course with a DCN Prefix <sup>1</sup>		3-6
DSW 817	Interprofessional Clinical Practice and Higher Education Leadership	3
DSW 830	Experiential Teaching & Learning	3
GPH 702	An Interprofessional Approach to Policy & Advocacy	3
GPH 725	Public Health Financial Management	3
GPH 727	Grant Writing	3

MBS 640	Medical Ethics	3
MBS 675	Applied Genomics	3

<sup>1</sup> Program specific required DCN courses are exempt as elective options.

## Academic and Technical Standards

### Minimum Grade Point Average

Matriculated graduate students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better. Failure to do so will result in academic probation and possible termination from the program. Any student receiving a grade below B- on any individual course has failed that course must re-enroll and repeat the course to achieve a grade of B- or better. Any student who receives a grade of F in two or more courses may be dismissed from the program. An F that is replaced through retaking the course does not count toward this policy.

### Graduation

Candidates must fulfill all program requirements and are required to earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 to be eligible to graduate. All students must file an Application to Graduate with the registrar's office via UNE Compass. Please see the Graduation FAQ (<https://www.une.edu/registrar/graduation/>) for complete instructions and the answers to frequently asked questions.

### Code of Ethics for the Nutrition and Dietetics Profession Principles and Standards

DCN students are required to become members of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, if they are not current members.

As practitioners, our DCN students are held to the principles and standards of Code of Ethics for the Nutrition and Dietetics Profession.

#### Competence and Professional Development in Practice (Non-Maleficence)

Nutrition and dietetics practitioners shall:

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

#### Integrity in Personal and Organizational Behaviors and Practices (Autonomy)

Nutrition and dietetics practitioners shall:

1. Disclose any conflicts of interest, including any financial interests in products or services that are recommended. Refrain from accepting gifts or services that potentially influence or may give the appearance of influencing professional judgment.
2. Comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including obtaining/maintaining a state license or certification if engaged in practice governed by nutrition and dietetics statutes.
3. Maintain and appropriately use credentials.
4. Respect intellectual property rights, including citation and recognition of the ideas and work of others, regardless of the medium (e.g. written, oral, electronic).
5. Provide accurate and truthful information in all communications.
6. Report inappropriate behavior or treatment of a patient/client by another nutrition and dietetics practitioner or other professionals.
7. Document, code, and bill to most accurately reflect the character and extent of delivered services.
8. Respect patient/client autonomy. Safeguard patient/client confidentiality according to current regulations and laws.
9. Implement appropriate measures to protect personal health information using appropriate techniques (e.g., encryption).

#### Professionalism (Beneficence)

Nutrition and dietetics practitioners shall:

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

#### Social Responsibility for Local, Regional, National, Global Nutrition and Well-Being (Justice)

Nutrition and dietetics practitioners shall:

1. Collaborate with others to reduce health disparities and protect human rights.
2. Promote fairness and objectivity with fair and equitable treatment.
3. Contribute time and expertise to activities that promote respect, integrity, and competence of the profession.
4. Promote the unique role of nutrition and dietetics practitioners.

5. Engage in service that benefits the community and enhances the public's trust in the profession.
6. Seek leadership opportunities in professional, community, and service organizations to enhance health and nutritional status while protecting the public.

### Glossary of Terms

**Autonomy:** Ensures a patient, client, or professional has the capacity and self-determination to engage in individual decision-making specific to personal health or practice.<sup>1</sup>

**Beneficence:** Encompasses taking positive steps to benefit others, which includes balancing benefit and risk.<sup>1</sup>

**Competence:** A principle of professional practice, identifying the ability of the provider to administer safe and reliable services on a consistent basis.<sup>2</sup>

**Conflict(s) of Interest(s):** A personal or financial interest or a duty to another party that may prevent a person from acting in the best interests of the intended beneficiary, including simultaneous membership on boards with potentially conflicting interests related to the profession, members, or the public.<sup>2</sup>

**Customer:** Any client, patient, resident, participant, student, consumer, individual/person, group, population, or organization to which the nutrition and dietetics practitioner provides service.<sup>3</sup>

**Diversity:** "The Academy values and respects the diverse viewpoints and individual differences of all people. The Academy's mission and vision are most effectively realized through the promotion of a diverse membership that reflects cultural, ethnic, gender, racial, religious, sexual orientation, socioeconomic, geographical, political, educational, experiential, and philosophical characteristics of the public it serves. The Academy actively identifies and offers opportunities to individuals with varied skills, talents, abilities, ideas, disabilities, backgrounds, and practice expertise."<sup>4</sup>

**Evidence-based Practice:** Evidence-based practice is an approach to health care wherein health practitioners use the best evidence possible, i.e., the most appropriate information available, to make decisions for individuals, groups, and populations. Evidence-based practice values, enhances, and builds on clinical expertise, knowledge of disease mechanisms, and pathophysiology. It involves complex and conscientious decision-making based not only on the available evidence but also on client characteristics, situations, and preferences. It recognizes that health care is individualized and ever changing and involves uncertainties and probabilities. Evidence-based practice incorporates successful strategies that improve client outcomes and are derived from various sources of evidence, including research, national guidelines, policies, consensus statements, systematic analysis of clinical experience, quality improvement data, specialized knowledge, and skills of experts.<sup>2</sup>

**Justice (social justice):** Supports fair, equitable, and appropriate treatment for individuals<sup>1</sup> and fair allocation of resources.

**Non-Maleficence:** The intent to not inflict harm.<sup>1</sup>

### References

<sup>1</sup> Fornari A. Approaches to ethical decision-making. *J Acad Nutr Diet.* 2015;115(1):119-121.

<sup>2</sup> Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Definition of Terms List. June, 2017 (Approved by Definition of Terms Workgroup Quality Management Committee May 16, 2017). Accessed October 11, 2017.

<sup>3</sup> Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: Revised 2017 Standards of Practice in Nutrition Care and Standards of Professional Performance for Registered Dietitian Nutritionists. *J Acad Nutr Diet.* 2018; 118: 132-140.

<sup>4</sup> Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics "Diversity Philosophy Statement" (adopted by the House of Delegates and Board of Directors in 1995).

### Ethics and Credentialing

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (Academy) and Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) Code of Ethics for the Nutrition and Dietetics Profession outlines explicit principles and ethical standards for professional conduct as a nutrition and dietetics practitioner. All students are required to acquire their own copy of the Academy/CDR Code of Ethics and are subsequently responsible for reading, understanding, and following all principles and standards as outlined.

Students must maintain current credentialing as a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (or international equivalent) for the duration of program enrollment. Students whose credentials lapse or who are subject to an action or decision by the Academy or CDR (or equivalent international credentialing agency) may be subject to disciplinary procedures or dismissal from the program.

### Doctor of Clinical Nutrition Program Goals

- Provide safe, ethical, equitable, and culturally relevant evidence-based healthcare, education, and community services.
- Lead integration of evidence-informed best practices, critical thinking and/or research in professional settings.
- Model leadership and management skills in organizational, healthcare, and academic settings.
- Work collaboratively in interprofessional settings to provide comprehensive approaches to healthcare services and education.

### Objectives in Support of the Goals of the Doctor of Clinical Nutrition

Graduates of the UNE Doctor of Clinical Nutrition will:

1. Apply adaptive and responsive leadership skills in healthcare, higher education, and community settings (depending on student focus area).
2. Apply evidence-informed approaches when generating, appraising, and utilizing research.
3. Lead the provision of safe, ethical, and evidence-based healthcare, higher education, and community services.