

## Opportunities and Success in Food, Nutrition and Dietetics

The Food, Nutrition and Dietetics sequence in the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences at Illinois State University offers two degree options as described on our [FND website](#).

- 1) Dietetics
- 2) Food and Nutrition Management

The Dietetics option is an ACEND-accredited DPD program that was first accredited June 2000 and reaccredited October 2011, and it provides the first two steps to becoming a registered dietitian (R.D.).

Food and Nutrition Management is a new program option beginning in Fall 2014 that requires fewer science courses and prepares graduates for careers related to food and nutrition.

### Dietetics is Competitive

The Dietetics option prepares graduates for an ACEND-accredited dietetic internship. Upon successful completion of the post-graduation dietetic internship and passing the national registration exam, one is a registered dietitian (R.D.). It is important to know about the competitiveness of dietetic internships, how to be more successful in the national internship matching process, and what it takes to be matched to a dietetic internship.

Becoming a R.D. requires that you complete a bachelor's degree and the courses required by an ACEND-accredited undergraduate DPD program. At Illinois State University, the Dietetics option meets both requirements. Next you must apply through DICAS to one or more of the current 250 ACEND-accredited dietetic internships and rank your internship preferences through D&D Digital. You will either be matched to one internship or not matched.

For the past 4-5 years, the national match rate for internships has been 50-52% of applicants being matched to an internship. During this period about 50% of applicants have not been matched nationally.

Success in being matched to an internship is increased by:

- 1) Strong science, professional, and overall course GPA (this includes every college course taken)
- 2) Dietetics related work experience (hospital/long-term care facility best; foodservice, e.g., Campus Dining Services)
- 3) Quality of your internship application (application, letter, resume, letters of recommendation)
- 4) Interview performance
- 5) Applying to internships appropriate for your qualifications (items 1 – 4) and your preference ranking of the internships

Illinois State University's DPD program has had a 66-80% match rate during the past 4-5 years. Successful applicants usually have the following grades or higher:

- 1) Overall minimum GPA of 3.3 – 3.4
- 2) Chemistry grades of CHE 110 – A or B, CHE 112 – A, CHE 220 – B or C, CHE 242 B or C
- 3) Other science grades: BSC 160 and KNR 182 – A or B
- 4) COM 110, ECO 103/105, MQM 220, PSY 110 – A or B

- 5) FCS 102, 311, 312, 318, 319, 398 – A or B
- 6) FCS 113, (213) – A
- 7) FCS 316, 317 – B or C
- 8) New courses in 2014-15: FCS 217 and 219 – A or B

Currently the most competitive Internships are those that do not require graduate courses or a master's degree, are located in major cities at large medical centers, the VA system, which does not charge an application fee, and those located in Sunbelt states. Internships at private universities, those requiring a master's degree, and internships in rural areas are less competitive. If not matched, work in a hospital or long-term care facility as a diet tech, or other dietetics-related experience will increase one's future chances of being matched to an internship.

In the next several years ACEND will require a master's degree to become a registered dietitian so more internships will start to require master's degree in the near future. Check out the [Steps to Becoming a R.D. link](#) on the Food, Nutrition and Dietetics website and also the [Steps to Becoming a Registered Dietitian link](#) located in the Resources box on the first link to learn more about dietetics, the process and what it takes to become a R.D.

### Food and Nutrition Management

The trend of consumers eating more and more meals away from home and spending money on prepared foods continues to grow. The new Food and Nutrition Management option is a good choice if you are interested in a career in the food industry and prefer not to take the additional science and medical nutrition therapy courses required of dietetics students. Trained and qualified managers are needed wherever food is served. The aging population and health concern make healthy food more important.

The Food and Nutrition Management program option combines business and management principles with food service and hospitality skills, and opens the doors to a variety of careers in the food service and management industry. This degree option requires fewer science courses (no organic or biochemistry) and more business and food-related courses than the dietetics option.

Consumers spend about 50% of their food dollars in restaurants, cafeterias, fast-food franchises, at work, and at school. Food systems managers organize these operations and make sure the foods are attractive, nutritious and safely prepared. A wide variety of employment opportunities exist in jobs related to food. Popular career options include restaurant manager, cafeteria manager, caterer, and corporate, hospital, long-term care, or school food service manager. Employment opportunities also exist with companies that produce food, food ingredients, or processing equipment, and in food safety inspection, food sales, marketing, and business management.

Check out the [Careers website](#) to learn more about career options and what it takes to be successful in both Food, Nutrition and Dietetics degree options.