

# Education Preparation in Dietetics

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COURSE: CHAPTER 2

BOOK: CHAPTER 3

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**“ As a profession, the one thing we can predict is that the greatest change in our practice will be the change in knowledge and how we integrate new science into our daily practice”**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Ua-WVg1SsA>

# Introduction

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- ❖ Education is key to the dietetic practice and the future of the profession
- ❖ A specialized body of knowledge is required of individuals who practice any area of dietetics
- ❖ Early leaders set standards for education, that are continuously revised at intervals as the practice evolves and the needs of those who are served is changed

# Undergraduate Education in Palestine

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- ❖ Birzeit University : Nutrition and Dietetics – Faculty of Pharmacy, Nursing, and Health Professions
- ❖ An-Najah National University: Nutrition and Food Technology - Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine
- ❖ Hebron University: Nutrition and Food Technology – College of Agriculture
- ❖ Al-Quds University: Public Health Nutrition – Faculty of Public Health
- ❖ Palestine Polytechnic University: Therapeutic Nutrition – Faculty of Applied Sciences
- ❖ Al-Azhar University: Clinical Nutrition

# Undergraduate Education

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- ❖ A dietitian's educational preparation starts at the baccalaureate level which is based on:
  - Biological Sciences
  - Physiological Sciences
  - Behavioral and Social Sciences
- ❖ A degree program covers the AND standards in addition to university requirements.
- ❖ A degree is combined with supervised experience integrated with or follows the program to achieve the full educational requirements

# Types of Education Programs

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- ❖ Didactic Program in Dietetic (DPD): College curriculum that meets AND educational standards.
- ❖ Coordinated Program in Dietetics (CP): College curriculum combined with an experience component.
- ❖ Dietetic Technician Program (DT): Course of study in a two-year college or institution meeting ADA educational standards

# Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD)

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- ❖ The didactic or classwork portion of the dietetics educational requirement is completed during the degree program, either undergraduate or graduate. The traditional didactic program is a 4-year bachelor of science degree
- ❖ Following the degree conferral, the student completes a supervised practice program or internship.
- ❖ Many of the courses required in the DPD combine classroom and laboratory work, especially in *food production, clinical nutrition, and science courses such as chemistry and microbiology*.
- ❖ During the latter part of the program, usually the senior year, the student applies to one or more dietetic internships through a computerized matching program.
- ❖ After completion of the supervised portion of the program, the student may take the registration examination.

# Coordinated Program in Dietetics (CP)

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- ❖ The didactic portion of a program and supervised practice are completed during the course of study toward the degree, either undergraduate or graduate.
- ❖ The program is sometimes described as a “two-by-two,” meaning the first 2 years are general study and may be at a community or junior college and the last 2 include the integrated courses leading to the degree.
- ❖ A minimum of 1200 hours of supervised practice is required in the CP.
- ❖ The program is intense in terms of time requirements and experiences but can reduce the time needed to prepare for practice. On completion of the degree, the student is eligible to take the registration examination and is prepared for entry-level practice



# Dietetic Technician Program (DT)

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- ❖ Similar to the CP in that both didactic and supervised practice (minimum of 450 clock hours) are required.
- ❖ The Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) also accredits the programs. Graduates of the program may also become registered by taking the DTR examination.
- ❖ Many of the programs are offered in 2-year colleges or technical schools.

**Table 3–1** Comparison of Characteristics of Professional Members of the Dietetic Team

	<i>Dietary Managers</i>	<i>Dietetic Technicians</i>	<i>Dietitians</i>
Education/Training	Postsecondary education program approved by Dietary Managers Association (DMA) (site-based or independent study*) for those employed in food service positions: 120 clock hours of classroom instruction 150 clock hours of supervised field experience	2-year community college programs, approved by ADA (site-based or independent study) for full- or part-time students who may or may not be employed in food service positions:	4-year baccalaureate degree from an ADA-approved didactic program in dietetics consisting of: Baccalaureate degree (ADA approved) and ADA-accredited supervised preprofessional experience (at least 900 clock hours), usually administered through a different institution or 4-year baccalaureate degree from an ADA-accredited coordinated program in dietetics consisting of: Baccalaureate degree including 900 hours of supervised preprofessional experience administered through the degree-granting institution

	<i>Dietary Managers</i>	<i>Dietetic Technicians</i>	<i>Dietitians</i>
<b>Credential</b>	CDM National examination administered by the Certifying Board of Dietary Managers	DTR National examination administered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR)	RD national examination administered by the CDR
<b>Primary Employment Opportunities</b>	Long-term care facilities Life-care centers Hospitals Schools Correctional facilities	Hospitals Long-term care facilities Community nutrition programs	Hospitals Long-term care facilities Community nutrition programs Corporations (e.g., pharmaceutical, food manufacturers, food distributors, contract management) Self-employment
<b>Type of Work</b>	Manages/supervises food service operations	Supervises/provides patient/client nutrition services Supervises/manages food service operations Provides nutrition education	Manages/provides patient/client nutrition services Manages food service operations Develops/provides nutrition education programs Manages dietetic consulting services

# Education Program Standards

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- ❖ ACEND sets the standards by which dietitians are educated.
- ❖ The standards have been issued in various forms since 1924 and have undergone many changes in both concept and form. For instance, early emphasis was on the specific courses a student was required to take during a degree program. Now, the standards are based on the outcomes expected from the education experience.
- ❖ The ACEND evaluates each educational program through an accreditation site visit. A program may be accredited for a period of 5 to 10 years.

# Competencies & Performance Indicators for BSc Degrees

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**Unit 1: Foundational Knowledge**: Applies foundational sciences to food and nutrition knowledge to meet the needs of individuals, groups, and organizations

**Unit 2: Client/Patient Services**: Applies and integrates client/patient-centered principles and competent nutrition and dietetics practice to ensure positive outcomes

**Unit 3: Food Systems Management**: Applies food system principles and management skills to ensure safe and efficient delivery of food and water.

**Unit 4: Community and Population Health Nutrition**: Applies community and population nutrition health theories when providing support to community or population nutrition programs.

**Unit 5: Leadership, Business, Management and Organization**: Demonstrates leadership, business and management principles to guide practice and achieve operational goals

**Unit 6: Critical Thinking, Research and Evidence-Informed Practice**: Integrates evidence-informed practice, research principles and critical thinking into practice

**Unit 7: Core Professional Behaviors**: Demonstrates professional behaviors and effective communication in all nutrition and dietetics interactions.

# Palestinian Dietitians Syndicate 2011

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3. أن يكون حاصلاً على الشهادة الجامعية الأولى (البكالوريوس) أو ما يعادلها على الأقل في علم التغذية من جامعة متخصصة بتدريس هذه المهنة ومُعترف بها من الجهات المختصة.
4. أو أن يكون حاصلاً على الشهادة الجامعية الثانية (الماجستير) أو الثالثة (الدكتوراة) في علم التغذية من جامعة أو كلية معترف بها من الجهات المختصة إذا كانت الشهادة الجامعية الأولى لغير الحاصلين على بكالوريوس تغذية.

الجهات المختصة للاعتماد:

الهيئة الوطنية للاعتماد والجودة – وزارة التعليم العالي الفلسطينية، حيث تقوم هيئة الاعتماد والجودة والنوعية في وزارة التعليم العالي بمنح الترخيص لمؤسسات التعليم العالي والاعتماد للبرامج التعليمية وفق آليات ومعايير وإجراءات محددة.

<http://www.aqac.mohe.gov.ps/aqac/>

# Supervised Practice in Dietetics

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- ❖ Supervised practice takes place in the work setting where students learn to apply their knowledge and skills
- ❖ Competency (ability to carry out tasks within certain expected standards or parameters) in dietetics practice is the goal of supervised practice.
- ❖ A minimum of 1200 hours of experience for the dietitian and 450 hours for the DT
- ❖ Experiences are structured around three key areas of activity in dietetics: *clinical nutrition, food service management, and community dietetics.*

# Advanced-Level Education

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- ❖ Continuing education, pre-professional education, or graduate education.
- ❖ Graduate Education: formal study beyond a baccalaureate degree that leads to an advanced degree, that is, the master's or doctoral degree. It involves concentrated work in a specific academic area.



# Advanced-Level Education

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Why decide to pursue continuing education?

- ❖ More employers are requiring an advanced degree, training, or advanced credentials
- ❖ More disciplines are becoming specialized, thus requiring advanced-level education.
- ❖ It offers opportunities for individuals to explore new ideas and gain a higher level of knowledge and understanding required to recognize and fully discharge personal, social, and professional responsibilities.
- ❖ Networking with other advanced practitioners and specialists, the possibility of career advancement and financial gain.
- ❖ The development of intellectual skills such as the ability to master complex information, problem solve, and explore new ideas.
- ❖ For continuing education credit to maintain registration status.
- ❖ For gaining research skills.

# Types of Programs

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- ❖ Masters of Science (MS): 1-2 years full time study. A research component required which is reported in a thesis. – An option of thesis or non-thesis offered in some universities.
- ❖ Doctor of Philosophy (PhD): minimum 3 years of full time study. Original research will be required. The doctoral degree is considered the terminal degree, although, at times, it will be followed by postdoctoral academic study.

# The research experience

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- ❖ Research study based on area of interest.
- ❖ Need is determined by a literature research and feasibility of research (subjects, costs, originality).
- ❖ Investigate a problem → review literature → plan & implement study → collect & analyze data → write a clear, well-developed document.
- ❖ Requires initiative, critical thinking, problem solving, and ethics.
- ❖ Outcome of research is publication of the findings and continued studies


# Distance Education

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- ❖ With the increased use of technology by both students and practitioners, such offerings are often attractive to part-time students, older returning students, and others who reside away from a university setting.
- ❖ Continuing education opportunities for professionals are increasingly offered by distance through webinars, teleconferences, and social networking means.
- ❖ Many dietetic practice groups regularly communicate through blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and Skype (*see next slide*)
- ❖ In some locations, patient health care is provided through a “telehealth” system.

# Ex: DPGs on Social Media (Facebook)

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**Weight Management Dietetic Practice Group**

Page · 6.4K like this

Ázháf Farah and Razan Hijjawi øie like this  
Optimizing healthy weight through food and nutrition.

✓ Liked ▾




**Diabetes Care and Education Dietetic Practice Group**

Page · 8.7K like this

Razan Hijjawi øie likes this  
Diabetes Care and Education is a dietetic practice group of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

✓ Liked ▾



**Healthy Aging (HA) Dietetic Practice Group**

Page · 3.2K like this

Healthy Aging members are the most valued source of food, nutrition and wellness information and services for older adults.

✓ Liked ▾

# Future Education Preparation

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- ❖ The education of the dietitian focuses on the present and future roles professionals will fulfill. The traditional roles continue to expand as *environmental, demographic business, and health trends* create new opportunities for practice.
- ❖ ACEND, in 2013, initiated an Environmental Scan that revealed emerging nontraditional practice settings for nutrition and dietetics and an expanding scope of practice in the profession.

Example: Nutritional pharmacology, Informatics, Evidence-based practice, and behavioral counseling, among others.

# Future Education Preparation

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## Recommendations:

1. The requirement of a minimum of the master's degree as preparation for an entry-level, generalist, registered dietitian nutritionist.
2. The bachelor's degree required for entry-level nutrition and dietetics technician.
3. Associate degree preparation for nutrition health workers.
4. Competencies to be identified for each degree level.
5. Experiential learning integrated into each degree program.

# Definitions

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*Accreditation.* The process whereby a private nongovernmental agency or association grants public recognition to an institution or an individual who meets necessary qualifications and periodic evaluation.

*Advanced study.* Study beyond the traditional baccalaureate level.

*Advanced practice.* Effective discharge of job requirements that demonstrates a high level of skills, knowledge, and behaviors.

*Coordinated program (CP).* A degree undergraduate program that combines didactic and experiential learning.

*Specialist.* One who possesses a proficient level of knowledge, skill, and experience to qualify for a specific credential.

*Supervised practice.* Learning experiences associated with activities guided by a leader or preceptor.