

**NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
A CLOSER LOOK AT  
THE DIETETIC INTERNSHIP**

The mission of the Dietetic Internship at Northern Illinois University is to prepare graduate-level professionals to demonstrate knowledge, skills and values which enhance individuals and community health through dietetics practice.

## **PROGRAM INFORMATION**

The Dietetic Internship at Northern Illinois University (NIU) resides in the School of Family, Consumer and Nutrition Sciences (FCNS) within the College of Health and Human Sciences (CHHS).

This Dietetic Internship (DI) is affiliated with the Master of Science (M.S.) degree program in Nutrition and Dietetics at NIU. Dietetic interns complete graduate degree requirements while engaging in “supervised practice” (internship) experiences. The first two semesters (fall and spring) are comprised of graduate course work only. The subsequent two semesters are comprised of both course work and supervised practice experience. One summer semester is comprised of supervised practice only. At the end of the program interns will have completed the requirements for the M.S. degree in Nutrition and Dietetics and will be eligible to take the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) registration examination.

Dietetic internship experiences are comprised of 944 hours on-site: 300 hours in community nutrition, 444 hours in medical nutrition therapy (at one hospital), and 200 hours in food service (NIU Dining Services). Interns may select the General, Community or Food Service program emphasis.

The dietetic internship program accepts twelve interns annually; six interns each in spring and fall. At any one time, there are 18 interns enrolled in the program; three groups of six interns in each.

The graduate program in Nutrition and Dietetics focuses on applied nutrition and dietetic practice, and offers both a thesis and non-thesis option. Acceptance into the graduate program at NIU is required for acceptance into the Dietetic Internship. Although admission criteria is similar, acceptance into the graduate program does not guarantee acceptance into the Dietetic Internship as admission is competitive and limited to six interns each semester. Usually applicants apply to both programs and generally at the same time. The application deadline dates for the DI is not the same as the deadline date for the Graduate School.

## **PROGRAM SEQUENCE**

### **Step 1 - Graduate Coursework:**

During the first two semesters interns are enrolled in graduate coursework only. Graduate course work is completed during these two semesters, which are referred to as the “pre-practicum semesters”. During the second pre-practicum semester, interns enroll in a one-semester hour workshop (FCNS 551A). This workshop orients interns to both the internship and profession. Interns are encouraged to take course work in summer in order to complete all requirements of the graduate degree simultaneously with DI completion. After this year of coursework is completed, interns begin on-site supervised practice experiences while continuing to take graduate course work.

## Step 2 - Supervised Practice Experiences and Graduate Coursework:

After completion of the pre-practicum semesters, interns begin on-site supervised practice experiences while continuing to complete graduate coursework.

Interns are engaged in supervised practice experiences during three semesters: a spring, fall and summer semester. The exact sequence of semesters depends on whether the intern is admitted in spring or fall. Interns are on-site on Monday, Wednesday and Friday for 20 hours per week and on-campus for graduate classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays. During a summer semester, interns work on-site in a hospital, full-time for ten weeks; other graduate coursework is not possible during the summer Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT) practicum.

By taking coursework each semester, interns can expect to finish the internship and MS degree simultaneously. After completing both the requirements of the internship and graduate program, program graduates' names will be submitted to the American Dietetic Association's Commission for Dietetic Registration (CDR) for eligibility to take the registration examination, and will graduate with a M.S. degree in Nutrition and Dietetics.

### Dietetic Internship (Supervised Practice) Course Information

On-site Internship Courses	Type of Internship Experience	Location	Hours on Site per week.	Length of Practicum	Semester
FCNS 617	Food Service	NIU Dining Services	20 hours per week	10 weeks	Fall or spring semester only
FCNS 618	MNT	In one hospital	20 hours per week	5 weeks	Fall or spring semester only
FCNS 619	Community	In 6-8 different sites	20 hours per week	15 weeks	Fall or spring semester only
FCNS 624	MNT	In same hospital as FCNS 518	40 hours per week	10 weeks	Summer only

### PROGRAM SEQUENCE AND LENGTH

- SEMESTER 1 & 2**    **Pre-practicum Semesters - Coursework Only:** During these two semesters (fall and spring) interns complete graduate course work prior to initiating on-site practicum experiences. You will need to consult with your academic advisor to plan a program of study.
- SEMESTER 3**        **On-Site Supervised Practice & Coursework:** During this semester interns complete two practicum experiences: Food Service Management Practicum & Introduction to Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT). Both practicums are part-time 20 hours/week on-site. (Fall or spring only) Graduate course work is also required.
- SEMESTER 4**        **On-site Supervised Practice & Coursework:** Community Nutrition Practicum (spring or fall semester only). Part-time 20 hours/week on-site. (Fall or spring only) Graduate course work also required.
- SEMESTER 5**        **On-site Only - No Graduate Coursework:** Medical Nutrition Therapy Practicum (Full-time - Summer only).

## ON-SITE PLACEMENT

During the Food Service Management practicum, interns are assigned to the NIU Residential Dining. During the MNT practicum, interns are assigned to one hospital located in a city within driving distance of DeKalb. During the Community Nutrition practicum each intern is assigned to six or seven sites such as those listed below:

- NIU Campus Recreation and Health Enhancement
- Out-Patient Counseling Clinics
- Diabetes Education Clinics
- University Extension Programs
- Long-Term Care Facilities
- Corporate Sites: Integrated Inventory Technology, Inc.
- Wilton Industries
- Hospital-based Wellness & Health Promotion Sites
- ADA Headquarters in Chicago

Site placement will vary slightly depending on which “program emphasis” the intern selects: general, community or food service. Interns who select the general emphasis are assigned to a long term care facility and diabetes education clinic in addition to other community nutrition sites. Interns who select the community emphasis are assigned to a variety of community nutrition sites during the community semester. Interns who select the food service emphasis will spend an additional 100 hours at an alternate food service site.

## PROGRAM COSTS & FINANCIAL SUPPORT

### **Full Tuition Waiver:**

Substantial financial support is available to dietetic interns who enroll in this program. Interns pay for the internship courses by enrolling in university courses. However, during the three semesters when interns are engaged in internship (supervised practice) experiences on-site, NIU provides dietetic interns with a **full tuition waiver**. The waiver pays for tuition for both the internship experiences and other graduate coursework taken during the on-site semesters. Waivers provide free tuition which does *not* have to be paid back to the University. Students do have to pay for University fees and medical insurance. Although we are not guaranteed continuation of this benefit, at this time we do not have any indication that it will be eliminated. Up-to-date information about tuition, fees and insurance costs can be accessed on-line through the Office of the Bursar at <http://www.niu.edu/bursar/tuition/graduate.shtml> (if this link is not active, copy and paste the URL into your web browser) to connect with the Bursars Office website.

### **Graduate Assistantships:**

All interns, and especially those who are from out-of-state, are strongly encouraged to apply for a graduate assistantship during the first two semesters of graduate coursework. Although we cannot guarantee that every applicant will receive an assistantship, every effort is made to provide this benefit for interns. A graduate assistantship provides a tuition waiver and modest stipend. It does not pay for fees or medical insurance.

Graduate assistantships require that a student work for a faculty person for 10 hours per week assisting with teaching and /or research. At the present time, graduate assistantships provide approximately \$390.00 per month for a nine month contract (as of August 16, 2009).

### **University Fees:**

Interns are required to pay for University fees and health insurance while enrolled in graduate coursework and internship on-site experiences. The table on the following page lists the cost of University fees.

### **Insurance - Health and Professional Liability:**

Interns are required to have health (medical) insurance while enrolled in the program. Health insurance is available through NIU for full-time students, paid by your university fees. The table on the next page lists the cost of health insurance. Please note that tuition, fees and health insurance costs usually increase annually. Check the Office of the Bursar for most current costs at <http://www.niu.edu/bursar/tuition/graduate.shtml>.

### Loans and Grants:

The NIU Student Financial Aid Office is available to assist students with loans, deferments and grants. Student loans may be deferred during the internship experiences and graduate studies.

<b>Total Costs for 5 semesters - 2009-2010 academic year</b>	<b><u>With</u> assistantship: Cost of Fees &amp; Insurance \$0 Tuition required \$ 6,567.03</b>	<b><u>Without</u> assistantship: (In state tuition) Cost of Tuition Fees &amp; Insurance \$11,773.03</b>	<b><u>Without</u> assistantship (Out of state tuition) Cost of Tuition Fees &amp; Insurance \$ 16,979.03</b>
--	---	--	--

For a detailed breakdown of the costs, see below:

### Total Costs for Tuition, Fees & Insurance per Semester (based on full-time status) 2009-10

<b>Program Length: 4 Semesters and 1 Summer</b>	<b>Number of Semester Hours</b>	<b>Tuition In-state \$274.00/ Sm. Hour</b>	<b>Tuition Out of State \$548.00/ Sm. Hour</b>	<b>Fees \$75.53/ Sm. Hour, liability ins &amp; \$150 Tech Surcharge</b>	<b>Insurance \$377.00/ Semester (through course fees)</b>
<b>1. On Campus: Pre-practicum Semester</b>	9 Sm. hours coursework	<b>\$2,466</b> OR \$0 - Tuition Waived with Graduate Assistantship	<b>\$4,932.00</b> OR \$0 - Tuition Waived with Graduate Assistantship	\$695.77 \$150.00	\$377.00
<b>2. On Campus: Pre-practicum semester</b>	10 Sm. hours coursework	<b>\$2,740</b> OR \$0 - Tuition Waived with Graduate Assistantship	<b>\$5,480.00</b> OR \$0 - Tuition Waived with Graduate Assistantship	\$771.30 \$150.00	\$377.00
<b>3. On-site: FS &amp; MNT Practicum</b>	Internship and Graduate Courses 12+ Sm. Hours	\$0.00 Tuition Waived	\$0.00 Tuition Waived	\$922.36 \$150.00	\$377.00
<b>4. On-site: Community Practicum</b>	Internship and Graduate Courses 12+ Sm. Hours	\$0.00 Tuition Waived	\$0.00 Tuition Waived	\$922.36 \$150.00	\$377.00
<b>5. On-site: MNT Practicum Summer</b>	Internship Course Only 8 Sm. Hours	\$0.00 Tuition Waived	\$0.00 Tuition Waived	\$620.24 \$150.00	\$0
<b>Total Costs: 4 Semesters and 1 Summer</b>		<b>In-state Tuition Costs Only.</b> <i>Without</i> assistantship during pre-practicum semesters \$5206.00 OR - \$0 with assistantship	<b>Out of state Tuition Costs Only.</b> <i>Without</i> assistantship during pre-practicum semesters \$10,412.00 OR - \$0 with assistantship	<b>\$4682.03</b> Total Fees 5 semesters	<b>\$1885.00</b> Total Insurance Costs 5 semesters

Other miscellaneous program costs include: health documentation required by sites (titers and immunizations), course fees, textbooks, professional attire, and ADA membership, conference registrations.

Reference: Office of the Bursar, <http://www.niu.edu/bursar/tuition/graduate.shtml> Subject to change without notice.

**Other Costs:**

There are other costs associated with this program. Hospitals require extensive health documentation to verify immunity to diseases including titers and immunizations. These titers and immunizations may be obtained for a fee at NIU Health Services. Other required documentation that has associated costs includes criminal background checks, food sanitation certifications (either Serv Safe or State of Illinois), and an advanced level CPR certification. Other costs include membership in the American Dietetic Association, a subscription to the OL Manual of Clinical Dietetics, textbooks, and appropriate on-site attire including uniforms and lab coats, professional clothing, and registration fees for professional meetings. Since this is a commuting program, a reliable car is also required. Housing and transportation costs are also the responsibility of the intern.

**PROGRAM EMPHASES:**

Interns may choose the community, general or food service program emphasis. This dietetic internship provides 944 hours of supervised practice experiences on-site; the distribution of hours varies between emphasis areas.

**General emphasis:**

The *general emphasis* provides experiences in a variety of dietetics practice sites. When enrolled in FCNS 619 Community Internship, those students who select the general emphasis will be assigned to sites where medical nutrition therapy (MNT) is delivered in community settings as well as in more traditional community sites that are health promotion and wellness focused. The MNT focused sites include placement at a long term care site and diabetes out-patient counseling. Interns in this emphasis are required to complete the graduate level course: FCNS 615 Advanced Metabolic Nutrition Support, in addition to other graduate course work. This course, FCNS 615, does apply towards the graduate degree program in Nutrition and Dietetics.

**Community emphasis:**

When enrolled in FCNS 619, interns in the community nutrition emphasis will be assigned to community nutrition sites. Three hundred hours (300) of on-site experiences will be provided in sites such as the NIU Campus Recreation Center, University of IL Extension program, hospital-based community wellness programs, public health departments, and some corporate sites. Interns who select this emphasis also enroll in the course, FCNS 600A Seminar.

**Food Service emphasis:**

Interns who select the food service emphasis will be assigned to an alternate food service site for 100 hours during the FCNS 619 Community practicum. An additional course related to food service management is also required which will be selected in consultation and with approval from your academic advisor.

**Making the emphasis choice:**

When you are enrolling in the pre-practicum semesters, interns will be asked to rank order their choice of program emphases. An effort will be made to match interns with their first choice; however availability of sites may limit this choice. Each emphasis will provide a degree of depth in one area of practice.

### Distribution of Practicum Hours and Location by program emphasis:

<i>All interns complete the following practicum courses:</i>	General emphasis	Community emphasis	Food Service emphasis
	Location and Hours on site	Location and Hours on site	Location and Hours on site
<i>Medical Nutrition Therapy Practicum</i>	444 hrs in one hospital	444 hrs in one hospital	444 hrs in one hospital
<i>Community Nutrition Practicum</i>	200 hrs in community sites 100 hrs in “MNT –focused” community sites • Diabetes Clinics • Long Term Care Facilities	300 hours in community nutrition sites: wellness, nutrition education, public health, business sites	200 hours in community sites: wellness, public health, nutrition education, business sites 100 hours in alternate food service site
<i>Food Service Management Practicum</i>	200 hrs in Food Service Management	100 hrs in Food Service Management	200 hrs in Food Service Management

### TRANSPORTATION

All internship sites are within driving distance of NIU. One of the strengths of this program is its proximity to many locations where dietitians are employed. Sites are located throughout the western suburbs of Chicago, and the cities of DeKalb, Sycamore, and Rockford, IL. Most often commuting time is less than one hour, although on occasion, distances and/or driving time may be longer. Consideration will be given to the distance between your residence and sites when planning your site placement schedule, however, when you accept a position in this internship, you also accept the program’s right to assign you to appropriate sites to meet your learning needs.

### HOUSING

Student housing is not provided through the internship. Interns are responsible for locating and paying for their own housing. Residence halls are available on campus and many safe and adequate student apartments are available in the cities of DeKalb and Sycamore. NIU Housing and Dining is available to assist students with finding on-campus housing. Information can be accessed on their website: <http://www.niu.edu/housing> . NIU Commuter and Non-Traditional Student Services assist with off-campus housing. For information you can access their website <http://www.niu.edu/comnontrad/>

### APPLICATION PROCESS

Three separate applications are required:

1. Application to the Dietetic Internship program
2. Application to D&D Digital to participate in computer matching, and
3. Application to the Graduate School for admission to the MS degree program in Nutrition and Dietetics.

Application to the Dietetic Internship is separate from the application to the MS degree programs. The Graduate School requires a completely separate application and letters of recommendation, and *has different deadline dates*. Students need to apply to the graduate program using the application process and form specified by the NIU Graduate School at <http://www.grad.niu.edu/> Please note that in order to be eligible for a graduate assistantship, you must be fully admitted to the Graduate School.

Students need to apply to the Dietetic Internship using the standardized application which is available on our website at

[http://www.niu.edu/fcns/graduate/pdfs/program\\_application.pdf](http://www.niu.edu/fcns/graduate/pdfs/program_application.pdf)

Admission to the Dietetic Internship also requires participation in the national computer matching process. You can obtain the material from D&D Digital System's website at: <http://www.dnndigital.com/ada/index.html>. Their address is: D& D Digital in Ames, Iowa. Telephone: 515-292-0490. E-mail:dnd@netins.net.

Please pay attention to the fact that although these applications may have similar requirements, they may have different or separate application processes and deadlines dates.

Application deadlines are listed at

<http://www.niu.edu/fcns/graduate/pdfs/ComputerMatchingdates2006to2009.pdf>

### **CONTACT PERSON AND PROGRAM ADDRESS:**

For information about Northern Illinois University, please access the website <http://www.niu.edu/index.shtml>

Information about the dietetic internship can be accessed at <http://www.niu.edu/fcns/graduate/internships.shtml>

Information about the graduate program in Nutrition and Dietetics can be found in the graduate catalog at <http://catalog.niu.edu/index.php?catoid=8>

If you have questions about the dietetic internship you may contact the program director. Contact information is listed below.

If you have questions about the M.S. degree program in Nutrition and Dietetics, you may e-mail Dr. Josephine Umoren, Coordinator of Nutrition, Dietetics and Hospitality Administration at [jxu1@niu.edu](mailto:jxu1@niu.edu) .

While we do not host an annual open house, we do welcome prospective students and encourage them to make an individual appointment to visit the campus, talk with the program director, graduate faculty, and current dietetic interns, and to sit in on a graduate class. To make an appointment, please contact the dietetic internship program director:

Nancy Prange, M.S., R.D., L.D.N.  
Northern Illinois University  
School of Family, Consumer, and Nutrition Sciences  
DeKalb, IL 60115  
Telephone: 815/753-6386  
Fax: 815/753-1321  
E-mail: [nprange@niu.edu](mailto:nprange@niu.edu)

## FALL APPLICATION AND ADMISSION

SPRING Semester	FALL	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL	
Pre-practicum Semester I  Graduate Studies Only No Internship	Pre-practicum Semester II  Graduate Studies Only  FCNS 651A Workshop	Food Service Management Practicum (10 Weeks) MNT Practicum (5 Weeks) Graduate Studies	10 Week MNT Practicum  No Graduate Studies	Community Practicum and Graduate Studies	Program Completion  Take RD Exam

---

## NIU INTERNSHIP SEQUENCE OF EXPERIENCES

---

### SPRING APPLICATION AND ADMISSION

FALL Semester	SPRING	FALL	SPRING	SUMMER	
Pre-practicum Semester I  Graduate Studies Only  No Internship	Pre-practicum Semester II  Graduate Studies Only  FCNS 651A Workshop	Food Service Management Practicum (10 Weeks) MNT Practicum (5 Weeks) Graduate Studies	Community Practicum and Graduate Studies	10 Week MNT Practicum  No Graduate Studies	Program Completion  Take RD Exam