

Admission Requirements for the Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD)

Starting Fall 2020, students who are currently enrolled as food and nutrition concentration undergraduates will be required to complete an application for the Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD).

An application and admission process for the Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) is required for students interested in becoming a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist. All students must apply and be accepted into the DPD in order to receive a Verification Statement upon graduation, which is needed to enter into a Dietetic Internship. Applications can be found in the Appendix of the Nutrition/DPD Handbook and in the Canvas Nutrition Student Hub.

DPD Application deadlines for each semester are the last day of classes for the semester.

Criteria for DPD Admission

- Completion of DPD Application Form
- Completion of 60 or more credits by the end of the semester in which you apply
- Completion of at least 15 credits at Mississippi State University at the time of application submission
- GPA of 3.0 or higher
- Completion (or in progress) at application time of the following courses (or approved equivalents) with a letter grade of C or higher:
 - CH 1213/1211 – Chemistry I and Lab
 - CH 1223/1221 – Chemistry II and Lab
 - CH 2503/2501 Elem Organic Chemistry and Lab
 - BIO 1134 Biology I
 - FNH 2293 Individual and Family Nutrition
 - ST 2113 Intro to Stats

Application

After submitting the application by the deadline, all students will receive notification via email regarding the status of their application before registration begins for the following semester. Students who meet all of the above criteria for DPD entrance requirements and have a GPA of 3.0 or higher will be automatically accepted into the DPD.

Students are allowed to apply to the DPD only 2 times; therefore, they should not apply until they are quite sure they have met or can meet the DPD admission criteria by the end of the semester in which they apply. Final decisions regarding admission are made at the discretion of the nutrition faculty.

It is recommended that admitted DPD students are members of the MSU Student Dietetic Association and obtain a student membership to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Academy membership begins June 1, is one-year long, and is \$58 for students. See the [Academy student membership page](#) for more information.

DPD Progression Policy

Once admitted to the program, students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0. Dietetic internships are extremely competitive. Successful completion of all DPD required courses does not guarantee admission to a dietetic internship.

Students not maintaining a GPA of 3.0 or who receive a course grade of “D” or “F” in any program required course may be dismissed from the Didactic Program in Dietetics at the discretion of program leadership. Students who find themselves in that situation should meet with the DPD Director soon as possible.

DPD students with a “D” or “F” may consider continuing with the food and nutrition concentration, but must sign an acknowledgement stating that they wish to remain in the food and nutrition concentration, but are aware that they are not longer DPD students and will not be eligible for a verification statement. The DPD Director will advise the student on career options and will also direct the student to the Career Center to explore other career/degree options.

DPD students with a “D” or “F” who wish to remain DPD students and earn a verification statement may repeat the DPD courses for which they have received a grade of “D” or “F”. To remain a DPD student prior to retaking the course and obtaining a “C”, the student must meet with the course instructor and the DPD director to discuss strategies to improve in the course. Strategies will be written up by the student, signed by the DPD Director, and put in the student file.

DPD students whose GPA drops lower than 3.0 will meet with the DPD Director to discuss strategies to improve the GPA back to a 3.0 or higher. Strategies will be written up by the student, signed by the DPD Director, and put in the student file. Students will be dismissed from the DPD program after two consecutive semesters of a GPA of less than 3.0. DPD students who are dismissed may continue with the food and nutrition concentration, but must sign an acknowledgement stating that they wish to remain in the food and nutrition concentration, but are aware that they are no longer DPD students and will not be eligible for a verification statement. The DPD Director will advise the student on career options and will also direct the student to the Career Center to explore other career/degree options.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why do I want to apply to the DPD?

If you plan to apply or are considering applying for a Dietetic Internship (DI) in order to become a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN), you need to apply to the DPD. In order to enter into a DI you need a Verification Statement from the DPD Director stating that all of the DPD coursework requirements were met. You will only receive a Verification Statement if you have applied to and are accepted into the DPD.

In addition, admission into the DPD will ensure that you receive relevant and important information regarding the DPD and applying for DI's.

After acceptance in to the DPD, what if I change my mind and do not want to be a RDN?

That's OK. You can either withdraw from the DPD and choose the Nutrition Studies or Nutritional Science track, or you can remain in the DPD. If you remain in the DPD, you will receive a Verification Statement that you could use if you change your mind in the future.

Are there extra classes required for DPD students?

No. You will complete all courses that are listed on the Food Science, Nutrition and Health Promotion Food and Nutrition concentration curriculum. The only additional requirement is that you maintain the stated grade and GPA criteria to meet the program's accreditation requirements.

What if I am not accepted into the DPD?

If you do not meet the criteria when you apply, you can re-apply the following semester. However, you can only apply a total of two times. You should contact Mandy Conrad (agc8@msstate.edu) or your advisor about steps you can take to make sure you are eligible to apply to the DPD.

If I am currently taking one or more required courses, can I still apply now?

Yes, as long as you meet all other criteria and are currently taking the required course. Your grades will be reviewed at the end of the semester to ensure that you received the required grade before receiving final acceptance into the DPD.

If I have a GPA just under 3.0 but meet all other criteria, can I still apply to the DPD?

We do review all applications. Then, at the end of the semester that you applied, we review your GPA again. If it is 3.0 or greater, then you are accepted.

If my GPA is under 3.0 and I can only apply twice, when should I apply?

You should apply when you meet all of the other criteria and when you think you can get your GPA above 3.0. GPA calculators can be found online to help you determine grades needed to pull your GPA over 3.0. If you need help with this decision, please see your advisor.

Can I still get a Verification Statement if I did not apply to or was not accepted into the DPD?

As long as you have followed the DPD curriculum according to the Mississippi State University catalog, you can petition to the DPD Director to receive a Verification Statement. Contact Mandy Conrad (agc8@msstate.edu) for more information.

Please contact Mandy Conrad (agc8@msstate.edu) if you have questions about applying to the DPD.