



Master of Science, Medical Nutrition
Graduate Handbook
Policies and Procedures

2019-2020

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I. INTRODUCTION

Lifestyle-related chronic diseases now account for 70% of all U.S. deaths and 75% of U.S. health care expenditures, yet on average <1% of total lecture hours in medical school teach nutrition and fewer than 14% of physicians believe they were adequately trained in nutritional counseling. The MS in Medical Nutrition will directly address the national shortfalls in medical nutrition education and provide current and future health care professionals with formal training on diet strategies for health promotion and health maintenance.

Current and future health care professionals are ideal candidates for this program, including "gap year" students, i.e., those who have completed their bachelor's degree but have not yet secured admission to medical, veterinary, dental, osteopathic, physician assistant or similar schools. Additionally, current medical students, residents, fellows, and practitioners (MD, DO, PA, DVM, DDS, etc.), seeking to develop a strong knowledge base in the nutritional sciences and its application in the health care field would also benefit from the MS Medical Nutrition program.

Students in this program develop competence in nutritional biochemistry and its application in health maintenance, the treatment of disease, and disease prevention. Coursework and culminating experiences integrate training in therapeutic diets, nutrition guidelines, and supplement as well as functional food usage for optimal health. The program emphasizes self-directed learning using evidence-based nutrition research, and students develop interpretive expertise and nutritional assessment techniques to use in clinical practice. Proficiency in reading and interpreting nutrition research is another key program goal, and ensures graduates are well versed in the importance of making recommendations grounded in evidence-based practice.

II. MS MEDICAL NUTRITION

A. Prerequisites for Graduate Study in Medical Nutrition

- BS/BA degree with a minimum of a 3.0 GPA in the last 60 hours of coursework
- GRE scores (may be replaced with MCAT, DAT, or another qualifying exception)
- One Page Personal Statement & Three Letters of Recommendation

B. Coursework Requirements

Required Core Courses (9 credit hours)		Credit Hours
NTR 502	Statistics in Research	3
NTR 510	Food and Nutrition Across the Lifespan	3
NTR 511	Medical Nutrition in the Care and Prevention of Disease	3
Other Required Courses (3 credit hours) <i>(Courses may be substituted with approval of graduate committee)</i>		
NTR 500	Research Methods	3
Restricted Electives (12 credit hours) <i>(Courses may be substituted with approval of graduate committee)</i>		
NTR 524	Chronic Inflammation and Metabolic Syndrome	3
NTR 525	Complementary Nutrition	3
NTR 533	Ethics and Policy of American Diets	3
NTR 535	Nutrigenomics	3
Add'l NTR electives	Please check ASU Course Search for other online NTR course offerings. Other 500-level NTR courses may be used as electives if approved by graduate committee.	
Culminating Experience (6 credit hours)		
NTR 593	Applied Project Part 1	3
NTR 593	Applied Project Part 2	3
GRAND TOTAL		30 Credits

C. Admission Procedures for MS in Medical Nutrition Program

Admission to Graduate Study

Applicants to the Medical Nutrition program must send application materials to ASU Graduate Admission.

At a minimum, applicants to the Medical Nutrition program are expected to meet GPA requirements as established by ASU Graduate Education.

Nutrition Program Requirements

In addition to the online application submitted to Graduate Education, applicants to the Medical Nutrition program must include the following supplemental information:

- Three letters of recommendation
- A one- to two-page, typed, double-spaced, personal statement addressing the following: significant professional responsibilities you have held; your professional goals and reasons for desiring to enroll in this program; strengths that will help you succeed in this program and in reaching your professional goals; and your personal interests in research, including, if applicable, studies involving the practice of dietetics.

Processing of Applications

Please see the [ASU Online](#) website for current deadlines for ASU Online students.

Credentials submitted by applicants to the MS in Medical Nutrition are evaluated by ASU Graduate Admissions and the Nutrition Program Graduate Committee. To ensure consideration for admission, all application materials should be received by the priority deadline of **July 20th** for fall admission and **October 1st** for spring admission. After these priority deadlines pass, a rolling admission will apply. If deadline dates fall on a weekend, then the deadline will be the first business day (typically Monday) after that date. Based upon the recommendation of the Graduate Committee, applicants will be recommended for admission to ASU Graduate Admissions by the Medical Nutrition admission committee..

Notification of admission to the graduate program is usually given within two weeks of the application review.

Admission and Denial Criteria

No single criterion will serve as a basis for admission or denial to the Medical Nutrition. Criteria for admission include:

1. Evidence of outstanding scholarship from previous academic record.
2. Favorable letters of recommendation commenting on the applicant's academic and professional qualifications for graduate study.
3. Professional goals compatible with the Medical Nutrition course offerings.
4. Scholarly interest compatible with one or more of the faculty who are active in this degree program.

The decision of the committee will be one of the following:

- 1. Regular admission** - Granted when the applicant's file is complete; the applicant meets criteria of adequate academic preparation, satisfactory and competitive undergraduate grade point average, favorable letters of recommendation, etc.; and, when enrollment limits have not been met.
- 2. Provisional admission** – When the applicant is admitted with the expectation of maintaining a 3.0 GPA during a certain period of time. Failure to meet the GPA requirement will result in dismissal from the program.
- 3. Denied admission** - When the applicant does not meet the necessary criteria for admission; the applicant does not rank sufficiently high to be selected for the available slots; it is deemed that departmental program fails to match the applicant's needs, goals, and interests; or no suitable faculty advisor is available.

D. Applied Project

General Procedures

In addition to planning a program of course work, graduate students also must complete an Applied Project. The Applied Project consists of original work on a specific research or practice problem. The problem is decided upon by the student in consultation with their Applied Project Mentor. Students will select a topic and begin work on it during NTR 593 "Applied Project, Part 1" with the guidance of their Applied Project Mentor and the NTR 593 Instructor. Students will complete the Applied Project near the end of their graduate program, during NTR 593 "Applied Project, Part 2.

Selection of Applied Project Mentor

Students should begin the process of selecting an Applied Project Mentor during the first semester of their graduate program. The Applied Project Mentor is established at the initiative of the student, in consultation with the faculty member, and is approved by the Program Coordinator. See Appendix A.

E. MS in Medical Nutrition Plan of Study Approval

The Medical Nutrition Plan of Study (iPOS) should be thoughtfully and carefully planned with their mentor so that it meets the goals and objectives of the program and the student. Each student selects courses after consultation with their advisor. The Plan of Study should be completed and approved by the mentor and the Program Coordinator no later than the time the student has enrolled in 15 credit hours. A Plan of Study must have exactly 30 credit hours, no more and no less. Acceptance of the proposed Plan of Study must be verified by the Program Coordinator. After approval at the program level, the Plan of Study is submitted to ASU Graduate Education for final approval.

NOTE: all new Plans of Study have to be submitted online using the Interactive Plan of Study (iPOS) form available through each student's My

ASU account (access at <http://my.asu.edu>).

Changes in Plan of Study

Necessary changes can be initiated and petitioned by the student. The changes must be pre-approved by the Nutrition Program Coordinator, and the Graduate College.

F. Continuous Enrollment:

Once admitted to a graduate degree program or graduate certificate program, students must be registered for a minimum of one credit hour during all phases of their graduate education, including the term in which they graduate. This includes periods when students are engaged in research, conducting a doctoral prospectus, working on or defending theses or dissertations, taking comprehensive examinations, taking Graduate Foreign Language Examinations, or in any other way utilizing university resources, facilities or faculty time.

Registration for every fall semester and spring semester is required. Summer registration is required for students taking examinations, completing culminating experiences, conducting a doctoral prospectus, defending theses or dissertations, or graduating from the degree program.

To maintain continuous enrollment the credit hour(s) must:

- Appear on the student's Plan of Study, OR
- Be research (592, 792), thesis (599), dissertation (799), or continuing registration (595, 695, 795), OR
- Be a graduate-level course.

Grades of "W" and/or "X" are not considered valid registration for continuous enrollment purposes. "W" grades are received when students officially withdraw from a course after the drop/add period. "X" grades are received for audit courses. Additionally, students completing work for a course in which they received a grade of "I" must maintain continuous enrollment as defined previously. Graduate students have one year to complete work for an incomplete grade; if the work is not complete and the grade changed within one year, the "I" grade becomes permanent. Additional information regarding incomplete grades can be found [here](#).

G. Incomplete Grades

The College of Health Solutions will consider an incomplete grade request when the following factors are present:

- The student has been completing acceptable work (grade of C or better) and has completed 80% of the course.
- The student is unable to complete the course due to illness or conditions beyond the student's control.

- The student can complete the unfinished work with the same instructor.

Students have up to one calendar year to finish incomplete work. If a student does not complete the missing coursework by the date that is agreed upon on the incomplete request form, the instructor may change the grade to what was earned based on the work completed in the class. If the coursework is not completed after a calendar year, the incomplete becomes permanent. Repeating a class in which an incomplete is awarded will not replace the "I" on the student's transcript. Students must complete the incomplete request form and submit it to their instructor for review and processing.

H. Satisfactory Academic Progress

Per Graduate College guidelines, graduate students must maintain a minimum 3.00 grade point average (GPA) to maintain satisfactory academic progress and to graduate. Students whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.00 are placed on academic probation, receive an advising hold on their account, and are required to complete an academic performance improvement plan. If students are unable to raise the GPA to a 3.00 within nine credit hours or one year (whichever comes first), the program standards committee may recommend the student for dismissal from the program.

III. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

A. University Financial Aid

Information regarding financial assistance opportunities is available through [Graduate Education](#).

IV. TIMELINES

A. Calendar for Applying to Nutrition Graduate Program

ACTION	WHEN
1. Review admission materials from ASU Graduate Admissions and the Nutrition Program (materials available here)	As early as possible.
2. Have college transcripts, showing an undergraduate degree was awarded, sent to ASU Graduate Admissions .	Sufficiently ahead of time so official results are received by priority deadlines of July 20 or October 1st.
3. Complete application for admission to ASU Graduate Admissions , online.	Received by ASU Graduate Admissions by July 20 or October 1st for priority consideration.
4. Request three (3) letters of recommendation to be submitted online as part of your online application to ASU Graduate Admissions .	Received by ASU Graduate Admissions by July 20 or October 1st for priority consideration.
5. GRE scores sent to ASU Graduate Admissions . Specific exceptions to GRE scores can be accepted and can be found here .	Received by ASU Graduate Admissions by July 20 or October 1st for priority consideration.
6. A personal statement – included as part of your online application to ASU Graduate Admissions .	Received by ASU Graduate Admissions by July 20 or October 1st for priority consideration.
Notifications of Acceptance	
1. Notification of acceptance from ASU Graduate Admissions and the Nutrition Program.	Within two weeks of file review

B. Timeline for the MS Medical Nutrition

ACTION	WHEN
1. Contact your Graduate Coordinator and seek advice for course selections.	As soon as possible
2. Meet with Program Coordinator and faculty to select Applied Project Mentor	While enrolled in NTR 500
3. Begin Applied Project before or during NTR 593 “Applied Project, Part 1”	At least two semesters prior to planned graduation date
4. Finish Applied Project before or during NTR 593 “Applied Project, Part 2”	Last semester
5. Apply for graduation.	During last semester of graduate program

¹ Coursework and Applied Project must be completed within six [6] years of enrollment in the first course listed on the Plan of Study.

² Faculty within the Medical Nutrition program are typically on an academic-year contract, meaning they are on salary only from the beginning of the fall semester through the end of the spring semester. Some faculty may receive summer funding through research grants or for teaching summer session courses. **Proposal meetings, results meetings, and Applied Project defenses should not be scheduled during the summer unless there is confirmation of the availability of all committee members well in advance of the scheduled date.**

APPENDIX A

Interests of NTR MS Applied Project Nutrition Faculty

Christy Alexon, PhD, RD (calexon@asu.edu) – Functional foods for managing chronic disease, macro/micronutrient metabolism, obesity/diabetes, nutrition education/counseling

Christina Barth, MS, RD (Christina.Barth@asu.edu) -- Eating disorders, sports nutrition, weight management, child nutrition, women's health, yoga therapy, integrative healthcare

Michael Collins, DC, BS (Michael.Collins.4@asu.edu) -- Sports performance/human performance

Kathleen Dixon, MEd, RD (Kathleen.Dixon@asu.edu) -- Food service management, pediatric dietetics, nutrition counseling

Shauna Grant, MS, RD (Shauna.Grant@asu.edu) – Nutrition support, clinical nutrition, counseling and education, metabolic effects of sedentary lifestyles

Karen Gregory-Mercado, PhD, MPH, MCHES, CWWPM (Karen.Gregory-Mercado@asu.edu) – Health education and promotion, worksite wellness, health and wellness coaching.

Traci Grgich, MS, RD, SNS, CP-F (Traci.Grgich@asu.edu) -- Food service management, food safety, child nutrition/school lunch programs, pediatric nutrition, and pediatric diabetes management.

Teresa Hart, PhD (Teresa.Abraham@asu.edu) – Physical activity, sedentary behavior, and health

Melinda Johnson, MS, RD (Melinda.Duff@asu.edu) -- Nutrition and Media, Nutrition Communications, breastfeeding/lactation, prenatal nutrition, child nutrition, family feeding dynamics

Jessica Lehmann, MS RDN (Jessica.Lehmann@asu.edu) – Nutrition communications, healthy cuisine, child nutrition

Simin Levinson, MS, RD (Simin.Levinson@asu.edu) -- Sports nutrition, foodservice management, weight management, nutrition in wellness

Sandra Mayol-Kreiser, PhD, RD (Sandra.Mayol-Kreiser@asu.edu) -- Clinical nutrition, nutrition support, and nutrition through the lifecycle

Mary McMullen, MS, RD (Mary.McMullen@asu.edu) – Prenatal, infant, child nutrition and breastfeeding/lactation (WIC), Medical Nutritiontherapy, renal nutrition, restrictive eating

Michelle Miller, MS, RD (Michelle.J.Miller@asu.edu) -- Medical Nutritiontherapy, community nutrition and education programs, nutrition counseling, breastfeeding/lactation

Lisa Morse, MS, RD, CNSC (Lisa.M.Morse@asu.edu) -- Nutrition Support, Burns, Trauma, Clinical Nutrition (all topics)

Julia Pearl, MS (Julia.Pearl@asu.edu) – General aspects of healthcare delivery- the triple aim, fitness, physical activity, weight training, yoga, stress management, holistic health, wellness coaching/consulting, group fitness teaching/instruction to all levels and ages ranging from 5-85 years old, marketing of fitness programming in various environments such as commercial gyms/country clubs/spas/corporate wellness, independent studio ownership, speaking and presentation skills to various audiences.

Christina Scribner, MS, RD, CSSD, CEDRD (Christina.Scribner@asu.edu) – Nutrition therapy for weight related concerns and eating disorders; nutrition and substance abuse, female athlete triad, low energy availability among athletes, nutrition for athletic performance, pediatric and adolescent nutrition, and nutrition for general wellness

Christina Shepard, MS, RDN (Tina.Shepard@asu.edu) -- Nutrition education of the public and the health practitioner; nutrition and dietetic career education; weight control and childhood obesity issues

Note: Other research faculty in the Nutrition Program may also serve as Applied Project mentors or Committee members: Meg Bruening, PhD, MPH, RD; Carol Johnston, PhD, RD; Eric Hekler, PhD; Punam Ohri-Vachaspati, PhD, RD; Karen Sweazea, PhD; Natasha Tasevska, MD, PhD; Sonia Vega Lopez, PhD; Christopher Wharton, PhD; and Corrie Whisner, PhD.

Non-tenure-track faculty can also serve on thesis committees.

APPENDIX B

Course Sequence for Required Courses

One Year Course Plan:

Year 1

Fall A

NTR 502 Stats

NTR 510

Fall B

NTR 500 Methods

NTR 511

Spring A

Elective

Elective

NTR 593 Applied Project (1-3)

Spring B

Elective

Elective

NTR 593 Applied Project (1-3)

Summer

NTR 593 Applied Project (6 credits total)

Defend Applied Project

Two Year Course Plan:

Year 1

Fall A

NTR 510

Fall B

NTR 511

Spring A

Elective

Spring B

Elective

Year 2

Fall A

NTR 502 Stats

Fall B

NTR 500

Spring A

Elective

NTR 593 Applied Project (1-3)

Spring B

Elective

NTR 593 Applied Project (1-3)

Summer

NTR 593 Applied Project (total 6 credits)

Defend Applied Project

*Note: 12 credit hours of elective courses are required to graduate. Please consult with the faculty director for proper sequencing of courses.