DOCTOR OF CLINICAL NUTRITION (DCN) PROGRAM

Program Overview
The Graduate Programs in Clinical Nutrition include the Master of Science in Clinical Nutrition, the Doctor of Clinical Nutrition and the PhD in Health Sciences Nutrition Specialization (See Department of Interdisciplinary Studies). These programs are exclusively designed for Registered Dietitians (RDs) and are web based. The Doctor of Clinical Nutrition (DCN) Program is a model for advanced-level graduate study in clinical nutrition. Graduates are prepared with critical thinking and scientific skills needed for advanced-level clinical practice, management, research, and leadership roles to respond to the challenges of the 21st century. Graduates are consumers of research and scholarship, able to design, conduct, analyze, and publish scientifically sound research and other peer reviewed papers on evidence-based dietetics practice. The program instills an appreciation for interdisciplinary collaboration and education, provides "upskilling" opportunities to achieve expanded roles in health promotion, disease prevention, and intervention for a multi-cultural society.

Program Description
The Rutgers, School of Health-Related Professions (SHRP) Doctor of Clinical Nutrition (DCN) is the U.S.’s first advanced practice doctorate in clinical dietetics. The DCN is designed for the RD with an interest in advancing clinical learning, practice and research beyond the Masters degree. The 50-credit program enhances knowledge and skills through an in-depth study of clinical nutrition, emerging trends in dietetics, integrative care, education and policy, as well as critical analysis and application of research and practice in the clinical setting. The research experience includes the design and conduct of pilot and practice-based research studies. Students complete a 350-hour advanced practice clinical residency designed based on individual interests and goals, on a part-time or full-time basis. This is a web-based program; although the majority of students attend it part-time, a full-time option is available. Students are required to come to a university campus in New Jersey (Newark or Stratford) three to four times over the course of their study.
**Full-time and Part-time status**
The 50 credit program taken on a full-time or part-time basis (9 to 15 credits/year) generally takes approximately four to five years to complete, depending on semester credit loads.

**Department Faculty**
Please see the department faculty under Nutritional Sciences department/all campus.

**Primary Campus Location**
The DCN program is web-based. Students are required to come to Newark, New Jersey three to four times over the course of their study.

**Curriculum**
See database for program requirements and course descriptions and select your program.

**Mission/Goals/Objectives**
DCN Mission Statement
The Doctor of Clinical Nutrition (DCN) is dedicated to the pursuit of excellence through a clinically focused dietetics practice doctorate program. It prepares graduates with expert level knowledge and skills, critical thinking proficiency, and aptitude in scientific inquiry to foster the development of innovative, autonomous advanced dietetics practitioners and researchers. The program emphasizes interprofessional collaboration through coursework and a student focused clinical residency. The curriculum integrates evidence based practice in nutrition and dietetics which provides the foundation for graduates to complete a research project.

**DCN Goal Statements:**
The DCN:
1. Provides an in-depth study of clinical nutrition and evidence based practice through cutting-edge coursework and a clinical practice residency to prepare graduates to assume the role of an advanced level dietetics practitioner.
2. Prepares graduates to be able to design, conduct, and analyze clinical nutrition research in diverse settings.
3. Develops experts in evidence based nutrition practice using clinical reasoning and scientific inquiry.
4. Fosters professional leadership, service, and scholarly efforts.
**DCN Competencies**
Upon completion of the program, graduates will be prepared to:

1. Practice as an advanced dietetics practitioner for individuals, communities, and/or clinical populations with expert level competency in assessment, diagnosis, implementation and evaluation of clinical nutrition care plans using the Nutrition Care Process model, standardized language, and evidence based practice guidelines.
2. Conduct a comprehensive nutrition-focused physical assessment and interpret results relative to nutritional well-being using nutritional diagnostic reasoning and standardized language.
3. Incorporate knowledge of body composition and nutritional physiology to guide clinical decision making in the assessment of healthy and medically complex patients with acute, chronic and terminal illnesses.
5. Apply a global perspective to professional practice by incorporating scientific, clinical and cultural implications of food and nutrition into clinical practice.
6. Apply critical thinking skills in communication, information management, problem solving and resource utilization to foster professional autonomy in clinical practice.
7. Collaborate with other members of the healthcare team, industry and academia as the nutrition expert.
8. Mentor and teach clinical nutrition practice to students and colleagues across diverse health care arenas.
10. Become life-long learners, using self-assessment and continuing education to continuously advance individual knowledge and skills.
11. Comply with the Code of Ethics of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and display ethical behavior in practice, education, and scholarly activities.
12. Demonstrate competence in the interpretation and critique of scientific healthcare literature using an evidence analysis approach; apply and integrate findings into practice settings.
13. Design, conduct, analyze, and author papers on clinical nutrition research.
14. Present and defend research findings to professional audiences and develop a manuscript worthy of publication to a peer reviewed journal.

**Admissions requirements**
Prospective students must be RDs, hold a master’s degree, preferably in nutrition or a health related field (with a minimum GPA of 3.4) and have at least three years of professional experience as a clinical RD. Applicants that meet the admission criteria will be scheduled for an interview with select faculty in the Rutgers Graduate Programs in Clinical Nutrition.
Application materials for submission include an SHRP application, a letter stating short and long term goals for completing the DCN, a copy of the RD card, a resume, one letter of recommendation and transcripts from the highest degree earned. If the highest degree is not in nutrition, the transcripts from the nutrition degree must be included. Applicants who are foreign-trained must take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and must submit an official copy of a transcript evaluation prepared by a recognized transcript evaluation agency such as: World Education Services Inc., PO Box 5087, Bowling Green Station, New York, NY, 10274-5087, http://www.wes.org/; or similar transcript evaluation service. Foreign-trained applicants who have completed a master’s degree in the U.S. are eligible for a waiver from this requirement.

**Non-Matriculated Status**

Master’s prepared RDs who are considering making the commitment to a graduate program, or who wish to advance knowledge and skills, may take up to 12 credits on a non-matriculated basis.

Options for non-matriculated students can be viewed online.

**Additional Offerings**

The Department of Nutritional Sciences is a Continuing Professional Education (CPE) Accredited Provider (#UN001) with the Commission on Dietetic Registration. Each course hour is equivalent to one CPE credit hour. For more information on the continuing education course we offer visit the Institute for Nutrition Interventions website.

**For more information**

For more information contact the Office of Enrollment Services at (973) 972-5336. Additional programmatic information is available by going to the program website.

**For more specific information contact the program at:**

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RBHS - School of Health Related Professions
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