

Dietetic Internship Program

Handbook

2020-2021

**Department of Food Science & Human Nutrition
University of Illinois
Urbana, IL 61801**

Revised July 2020

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1. Program Description:

The Dietetic Internship (DI) program is administered by the Department of Food Science & Human Nutrition at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The Director of the DI is Jessica Madson PhD RD. Please contact her at jamadson@illinois.edu or 217.244.8714, if you have questions about the DI program.

The DI is designed to meet or exceed each of the Competencies/Learning Outcomes for a Dietetic Internship Program, as established by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) www.eatright.org/ACEND of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics www.eatright.org. The program is 33 weeks, beginning in August and ending in April of each year. The program provides 1 week orientation and 32 weeks for 32 hours a week and total of 1064 hours of supervised practice in clinical, community, food service administration and research. Completion of the University of Illinois DI Program fulfills all CDR requirements for supervised practice hours in order to take the Registration Exam.

The DI accepts 4 interns each year. The program is restricted to students who are already enrolled in the M.S. or Ph.D. degree program in Department of Food Science & Human Nutrition or Division of Nutritional Sciences and have a Verification Statement from an accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD). In 2010, the DI was approved to participate in the preselect option for matching dietetic interns. The application process is described in **Section B**.

The concentration area for the University of Illinois DI program is research. Students are required to perform independent research for their graduate degree. In addition, interns complete a research project linked to one of the rotation sites during the internship program. Graduates from this program are well prepared to assess the needs of their target populations, develop appropriate research questions, identify funding sources, carry out new programs/research, and objectively assess these programs' effectiveness.

2. Program Mission

To prepare entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists with a strong research base to become leaders in the fields of food, nutrition, and health.

3. Program Goals and Measurable Objectives**Goal 1. Prepare highly qualified registered dietitian nutritionists (RDN).****Program Objectives for Goal 1:**

- At least 80% of program students complete program/degree requirements within 28.5 months (150% of the program length).
- 80 percent of program graduates take the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists within 12 months of program completion.
- The program's one-year pass rate (graduates who pass the registration exam within one year of first attempt) on the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists is at least 80%.

- Of graduates who seek employment, 80 percent are employed in nutrition and dietetics or related fields within 12 months of graduation.
- 75% of employers will rate performance of alumni as above average or outstanding at one-year post graduation.

Goal 2. Train dietetic professionals to become leaders in their chosen fields and aid in their development and professional growth.

Program Objectives for Goal 2:

- 80% of graduates will have an approved PDP learning plan from CDR by the one-year post graduation survey.
- 25% of graduates will seek a leadership role in a local, state or national professional organization as measured by the one-year post graduation survey.

4. Accreditation Status

The University of Illinois Dietetic Internship program is an ACEND (Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics, 120 South Riverside Plaza Ste 2190, Chicago IL 60606-6995. Ph: 1-800-877-1600) accredited post-baccalaureate, supervised practice program which qualifies graduates to take the examination to become Registered Dietitians.

B. Application process for Prospective Interns

1. Who can apply?

The University of Illinois DI Program is accredited to accept a maximum of 4 interns per year and is restricted to students who have earned at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited school and are already enrolled in the M.S. or Ph.D. degree program in Department of Food Science & Human Nutrition or Division of Nutritional Sciences. If you are planning to complete the DI, please contact the DI Director, Jessica Madson (jamadson@illinois.edu) so that she is aware of your interest and can set an appointment to meet with you. At that time, she will discuss with you timing of application to the DI. Applicants are required to provide a Verification Statement (complete or from an accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) In addition, DI applicants are expected to have completed volunteer or work experience in clinical nutrition, community nutrition or food service settings.

2. What if I have not met the DPD requirements or do not have a Verification Statement?

In order to enroll in the DPD courses, you will need to complete the "Application for Concurrent Enrollment in the Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) and University of Illinois Graduate School". *This form is available on the DI web site.* Once you have completed this form, it should be submitted to Justine Karduck, MS, RD, (karduck@illinois.edu), the Director of the DPD in the Department of Food Science & Human Nutrition. Note that this application will require signature approval by your graduate advisor. Acceptance into the DPD program is not guaranteed and will be dependent upon performance in previous coursework and the availability of space in undergraduate courses. After Ms. Karduck has approved this application, Dr. Madson can assist you in planning your program of study.

3. What is the timing of completion of the DI and Graduate Degree?

Typically, students complete the internship after completing all their graduate degree coursework and research. However, doctoral students may complete the internship earlier in their graduate degree program, depending upon availability of slots in the internship and approval by their graduate advisor. Including the internship component, most MS students will be able to complete their graduate program in 3 years. Most PhD students will be able to complete their program in 5-6 years. The DI Director will inform students when they can apply to the DI.

Students may not enroll in DI until all other coursework for their graduate degree program is completed and they have completed most (or all) of the research requirements for their thesis or dissertation. The student may choose to defend a thesis before or after the DI, but it is expected that very little experimental work will be performed after the internship is completed. You will enroll in FSHN 590 and 591 during the internship.

When a student deposits their thesis or dissertation, he or she is no longer eligible to register for courses. It is imperative, therefore, that interns complete DI courses before depositing a thesis. Contact the Dietetic Internship Director if you have questions about this requirement.

4. How do I apply to the DI?

a. Pre-select Option to Computer Matching

The University of Illinois DI participates in the pre-select option. In the pre-select process, the program can select up to 4 students per year who have met the admission requirements for the DI. The DI Director then informs D&D Digital Systems which applicants have matched to the University of Illinois DI for the upcoming year. Applicants **cannot** match to the University of Illinois DI through computer matching the D&D Digital Systems. However, if an applicant is not matched to the University of Illinois DI, they can apply to other internships through the computer matching process.

b. Application Process

Applicants must submit the following materials to the DI Director (Jessica Madson, 363 Bevier Hall) by **October 15th** (or the next week day closest to that date) of the fall prior to the year you intend to complete the internship:

1. **Cover letter** summarizing your motivation for completing the RD and your career goals
2. **AND Dietetic Internship Application Form** *This form is available on the DI web site.*
3. **Degree Progress Form** signed by your graduate advisor to verify they will have completed all graduate course requirements and a major portion of the thesis research prior to starting to the dietetic internship program. *This form is available on the DI web site.*
4. **Verification Statement** (completion or intent to complete) from an accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD)
5. Copy of **Current Immunization Record**

6. **Three Reference Letters** on the AND reference form. *This form is available on the DI web site.*

- a. At least 1 letter must come from an employer or academic advisor who has worked closely with the student
- b. At least 1 letter must come from a professor or instructor
- c. In order to ensure confidentiality, letters of recommendation must be sent directly to the DI Director from the employer/instructor's office. Alternatively, letters may be sealed in an envelope and signed across the envelope flap by the employer/instructor and then submitted with the student's other application materials

7. **Copies of your undergraduate and graduate transcripts** from your graduate application file will be obtained from the Department of Food Science & Human Nutrition or the Division of Nutritional Sciences office by the DI Director. You do NOT need to request copies of transcripts from previous degrees.

c. What are the selection criteria?

Due to high demand for the DI, it is possible that more than 4 students will be applying for the internship in a given year. Applications will be evaluated by the DI Internal Advisory Committee and acceptance for competitive admission to the DI be based on the following criteria:

- Quality of the cover letter
- Cumulative GPA, undergraduate, graduate and DPD coursework
- GRE scores - minimum 900 cumulative score for quantitative and verbal
- Volunteer or paid experience in nutrition and dietetics (preferably with registered dietitians in a variety of work settings)
- Letters of Recommendation
- Degree objective (MS vs. PhD) – *Doctoral students will be given priority*
- Thesis or Non-thesis MS – *MS students completing thesis research will be given priority*

d. When will I know if I am matched in the Preselect Process?

The applicant will be notified on **November 15th**, or the week day closest to that date, confirming her/his acceptance or rejection into the program through the pre-select process.

If pre-selected, the applicant will be required to complete a form including social security number and original signature. The Program Director must submit this form by February 1st to D&D Digital Systems, Inc. to ensure that the applicant will not participate in the April computer match.

e. What if I am NOT matched in the Preselect Process?

Applicants may apply to another DI through the computer-matching process. Applicants participating in computer matching should request instructions and a mark/sense card to prioritize their DI preferences. Applicants should request this material from any ACEND-accredited/approved Didactic Program in Dietetics program director or from D&D Digital Systems, Inc. <http://www.dnddigital.com/> or dnd@netins.net. This request should be made to allow turnaround time for submitting by the February postmark deadline for computer matching. There is no charge for this material. However, there is a \$50.00 charge for computer matching that is due with the applicant's prioritized ranking.

C. What are the costs of the DI program?**1. Stipend**

There is no guarantee that you will receive support from your graduate advisor during the DI. However, the DI Director will work with the prospective intern and his or her graduate advisor to determine whether an assistantship can be provided during the internship. If not, interns will be responsible for their own living expenses and tuition. Interns can also apply for scholarship support for DI through the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

2. University of Illinois Tuition & Fees

If an intern is not being supported by an assistantship, scholarship or fellowship that provides that tuition and fee waiver, they will be responsible for tuition and fees. To view the current costs, please visit the Office of the Registrar's tuition and fee rates page: <http://registrar.illinois.edu/financial/tuition.html>. Tuition assessment is based on the total number of credit hours being taken per semester. Both FSHN 590 and 591 are 5 credit hours (Range III).

3. Internship Participation Fee

In addition to tuition and fees, interns are required to pay a fee for participation in the DI. The annual fee is \$2,200. The \$1100 fee will be automatically billed to your university account at the beginning of each semester for a total of \$2200.

4. Other Costs:

- a. Student membership in the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND) (\$50.00)
- b. Student membership in the Eastern Illinois Dietetic Association (EIAND) (\$5.00)
- c. Practice Liability Insurance (~\$24.00)
- d. TB test between June and August (cost varies)
- e. Other Required Insurance:
 - Individual Health Insurance, if not covered by University of Illinois (cost varies)
 - Vehicle Liability Insurance (cost varies)

D. Didactic Portion of the Internship

During your internship, you will enroll in **FSHN 590** Dietetic Internship I (fall semester) and **FSHN 591** Dietetic Internship II (spring semester).

1. Course Objectives:

The goal of this internship is to equip you with the following skills:

- a. Integration of fundamentals of biological and physical sciences, theories of culture and behavior, learning, management and social interaction as they relate to human health.
- b. Application of the concepts of human biological, social and psychological development to health and disease.
- c. Application of administrative and clinical expertise in hospital-based and community settings.
- d. Active enlistment of current research techniques and findings in administrative, clinical, and community areas of practice.
- e. Become eligible to sit for the Registration Examination of The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.
- f. Prepared to function as entry-level registered dietitians and ultimately become leaders in the profession of dietetics.

2. Textbook and Reading Materials

- a. The required text is "*Food Medication Interactions, 16th edition*" by Zaneta M. Pronsky, MS, RD, LDN. This book can be purchased on Amazon.com
- b. It is highly recommend that you purchase the "*International Dietetics Nutritional Terminology (IDNT) Pocket Guide, ed. 3*", which is put out by the AND. You can purchase by calling the AND Member Service Center at 1-800-877-1600 ext 5000. Have your AND membership ID number ready.
- c. Throughout the internship experience, you will also utilize many other resources from your didactic training in dietetics. If those resources are out dated, you are responsible for updating them.
- d. In addition, you will be required to review AND position statements and other pertinent publications from the scientific literature. Check the Compass site prior to each rotation for review materials.

3. Attendance

The didactic portion of the internship will be held during the orientation week. You are expected to attend all portions of the orientation. If you will be unable to attend, you must contact the internship director prior to the class.

4. Grading

Course grading will be S/U. Each competency (listed in your internship binder) must be met in order to complete the internship experience. It is your responsibility to actively confirm opportunities to fulfill these competencies. If you are unsure of any of the competencies, check with the internship director(s) and your preceptor(s).

5. Assignments

The following must be satisfactorily completed during the internship period:

- a. All projects
- b. Research project
- c. Portfolio of assignments (binder)

6. Evaluations:

There are three “evaluation” forms that must be included in your binder. These are on the COMPASS site in the

a. Competency Evaluation

b. Intern evaluation of the Preceptor(s). This should be sent to me. Do NOT give to the preceptors.

c. Preceptor evaluation of the Intern at Midterm of a rotation six weeks or longer and at the end of the rotation

E. Description of Supervised Practice Sites**1. Carle Physicians Group – Diabetes (or other assigned location for outpatient diabetes)**

a. Overall Goal of the Rotation: The goal of the diabetes rotation at Carle Physician Group is to provide the interns with appropriate knowledge on how to provide medical nutrition therapy to diabetes patients, as well as, with other health conditions – hyperlipidemia, weight loss, hypertension, etc., in an outpatient/counseling setting. Provide them with the experience of being part of a Diabetes Recognized Program and teaching diabetes education classes and gestational diabetes classes.

b. Duration: 3 weeks

c. Assignments/activities that the interns will complete:

- i. Complete a list of different diabetes-related terms/definitions
- ii. Observe diabetes/gestational diabetes, pre-diabetes, heart healthy classes
- iii. Complete grocery store tour assignment can be completed before this rotation, but can bring to discuss different foods which would be beneficial to recommend to patients with diabetes and in general.
- iv. Complete 2 different case studies – preferably on a Type 1 and then Type 2 diabetic or gestational diabetic. Present case studies to the patient’s lead dietitian.
- v. Update or create a nutrition education handout for patients
- vi. Perform staff relief for the dietitians after observing them with patients for the first 1.5 weeks of the 3 week rotation. This entails providing medical nutrition therapy to the patients with diabetes, or other health conditions in which the intern is comfortable doing. Complete a chart note on patient using the ADIME method of charting.
- i. Be able to discuss different questions in regards to medical nutrition therapy for diabetes, diabetic oral medications/insulin, and other issues like sick days, alcohol, traveling as applies to people with diabetes.
- ii. Attend any staff/professional meetings as appropriate and if available when intern is there.
- iii. Observe the dietitian in the bariatric clinic and cystic fibrosis clinic as possible.

- iv. Meet with RD to discuss the diabetes recognized program the Endocrinology/Nutrition Services Dept. is a part of and become familiar with what this entails.
- v. Observe a diabetic nurse educator at least ½ day with patients.
- vi. Observe an Endocrinologist with 2-3 diabetic patients as possible.

2. Clinical

- a. **Overall Goal of the Rotation:** The goal of the clinical rotation is to provide interns with the tools and experiences necessary to function as a competent Registered Dietitian.
- b. **Duration:** 10 weeks
- c. **Assignments/activities that the interns will complete:**
 - i. Mini case study
 - ii. Major case study
 - iii. Patient care experiences
 - iv. Multi-disciplinary team meetings
 - v. Diet educations
 - vi. Nutrition Care Process
 - vii. Critical thinking skill and clinical judgment

3. Food Service Management

- a. **Overall Goal of the Rotation:** The goal of the food service management rotation is to provide interns with the tools and experiences necessary to function as a competent Registered Dietitian.
- b. **Duration:** 4 weeks
- c. **Assignments/activities that the interns will complete:**
 - i. Café promotion
 - ii. Menu and Cost Analysis
 - iii. Procurement activities
 - iv. Educational in-service to employees
 - v. Participate in daily operations

4. Eastern Illinois Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

- a. **Overall Goal of the Rotation:** The goal of the administrative rotation with the Eastern Illinois Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is to provide interns with supervised and leadership experiences in a dietetics professional organization. Each intern gains valuable hands-on experience in administration of the society's meetings and the roles of the member of the Leadership Team.
- b. **Duration:** 40h during internship
- c. **Assignments/activities that the interns will complete:**
 - i. Attend and participate in all EIAND meetings, schedule permitting.
 - ii. Completely coordinate one EIAND meeting, including speaker, snack, location, time
 - iii. Write articles for the EIAND newsletter and website.

- iv. Present at EIAND research forum.
- v. Improve the EIAND Facebook page, Tweet using Twitter, etc.
- vi. Attend advocacy day in April in Springfield, IL

5. Community Nutrition Rotation

a. Overall Goal of the Rotation: The goal of the community nutrition rotation is to provide interns with supervised experiences working with staff who deliver nutrition education to a variety of audiences. Interns will be able to observe and assist in program delivery as well as develop appropriate nutrition materials for target populations. Our nutrition programs partner with several community agencies/programs so interns will experience and observe how our clientele benefit from these community partnerships.

b. Duration: 8 weeks

c. Assignments/activities that the interns will complete:

- i. Familiarize themselves with Federally Funded Programs that provide food assistance and nutrition education.
- ii. Develop educational materials appropriate for at-risk audiences.
- iii. Observe and assist in the delivery of community nutrition programs.
- iv. Provide feedback to program supervisors on nutrition content, teaching methods and program evaluation observed during their internship.

F. CODE OF ETHICS FOR THE PROFESSION OF DIETETICS

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and its Commission on Dietetic Registration have adopted a voluntary, enforceable code of ethics. This code, entitled the Code of Ethics for the Profession of Dietetics, challenges all members, registered dietitians, and dietetic technicians, registered, to uphold ethical principles. The enforcement process for the Code of Ethics establishes a fair system to deal with complaints about members and credentialed practitioners from peers or the public.

The first code of ethics was adopted by the House of Delegates in October 1982; enforcement began in 1985. The code applied to members of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics only. A second code was adopted by the House of Delegates in October 1987 and applied to all members and Commission on Dietetic Registration credentialed practitioners. A third revision of the code was adopted by the House of Delegates on October 18, 1998, and enforced as of June 1, 1999, for all members and Commission on Dietetic Registration credentialed practitioners. The current Code of Ethics was approved on June 2, 2009, by the Academy Board of Directors, House of Delegates, and the Commission on Dietetic Registration.

The Ethics Committee is responsible for reviewing, promoting, and enforcing the Code. The Committee also educates members, credentialed practitioners, students, and the public about the ethical principles contained in the Code. Support of the Code of Ethics by members and credentialed practitioners is vital to guiding the profession's actions and to strengthening its credibility.

PREAMBLE

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and its credentialing agency, the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR), believe it is in the best interest of the profession and the public it serves to have a

Code of Ethics in place that provides guidance to dietetics practitioners in their professional practice and conduct. Dietetics practitioners have voluntarily adopted this Code of Ethics to reflect the values (Figure) and ethical principles guiding the dietetics profession and to set forth commitments and obligations of the dietetics practitioner to the public, clients, the profession, colleagues, and other professionals.

The Code of Ethics applies to the following practitioners:

- a) In its entirety to members of the Academy who are Registered Dietitians (RDs) or Dietetic Technicians, Registered (DTRs);
- b) Except for sections dealing solely with the credential, to all members of the Academy who are not RDs or DTRs; and
- c) Except for aspects dealing solely with membership, to all RDs and DTRs who are not members of the Academy.

All individuals to whom the Code applies are referred to as “dietetics practitioners,” and all such individuals who are RDs and DTRs shall be known as “credentialed practitioners.” By accepting membership in the Academy and/or accepting and maintaining CDR credentials, all members of the Academy and credentialed dietetics practitioners agree to abide by the Code.

1. The dietetics practitioner conducts himself/herself with honesty, integrity, and fairness.
2. The dietetics practitioner supports and promotes high standards of professional practice. The dietetics practitioner accepts the obligation to protect clients, the public, and the profession by upholding the Code of Ethics for the Profession of Dietetics and by reporting perceived violations of the Code through the processes established by the Academy and its credentialing agency, CDR.
3. The dietetics practitioner considers the health, safety, and welfare of the public at all times.
4. The dietetics practitioner will report inappropriate behavior or treatment of a client by another dietetics practitioner or other professionals.
 - a. The dietetics practitioner complies with all laws and regulations applicable or related to the profession or to the practitioner’s ethical obligations as described in this Code.
 - b. The dietetics practitioner must not be convicted of a crime under the laws of the United States, whether a felony or a misdemeanor, an essential element of which is dishonesty.
 - c. The dietetics practitioner must not be disciplined by a state for conduct that would violate one or more of these principles.
 - d. The dietetics practitioner must not commit an act of misfeasance or malfeasance that is directly related to the practice of the profession as determined by a court of competent jurisdiction, a licensing board, or an agency of a governmental body.
5. The dietetics practitioner provides professional services with objectivity and with respect for the unique needs and values of individuals.
 - a. The dietetics practitioner does not, in professional practice, discriminate against others on the basis of race, ethnicity, creed, religion, disability, gender, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, economic status, or any other legally protected category.
 - b. The dietetics practitioner provides services in a manner that is sensitive to cultural differences.
 - c. The dietetics practitioner does not engage in sexual harassment in connection with professional practice.

6. The dietetics practitioner does not engage in false or misleading practices or communications.
 - a. The dietetics practitioner does not engage in false or deceptive advertising of his or her services.
 - b. The dietetics practitioner promotes or endorses specific goods or products only in a manner that is not false and misleading.
 - c. The dietetics practitioner provides accurate and truthful information in communicating with the public.
7. The dietetics practitioner withdraws from professional practice when unable to fulfill his or her professional duties and responsibilities to clients and others.
 - a. The dietetics practitioner withdraws from practice when he/ she has engaged in abuse of a substance such that it could affect his or her practice.
 - b. The dietetics practitioner ceases practice when he or she has been adjudged by a court to be mentally incompetent.
 - c. The dietetics practitioner will not engage in practice when he or she has a condition that substantially impairs his or her ability to provide effective service to others.
8. The dietetics practitioner recognizes and exercises professional judgment within the limits of his or her qualifications and collaborates with others, seeks counsel, or makes referrals as appropriate.
9. The dietetics practitioner treats clients and patients with respect and consideration.
 - a. The dietetics practitioner provides sufficient information to enable clients and others to make their own informed decisions.
 - b. The dietetics practitioner respects the client's right to make decisions regarding the recommended plan of care, including consent, modification, or refusal.
10. The dietetics practitioner protects confidential information and makes full disclosure about any limitations on his or her ability to guarantee full confidentiality.
11. The dietetics practitioner, in dealing with and providing services to clients and others, complies with the same principles set forth above in "Responsibilities to the Public" (Principles #3-7).
12. The dietetics practitioner practices dietetics based on evidence-based principles and current information.
13. The dietetics practitioner presents reliable and substantiated information and interprets controversial information without personal bias, recognizing that legitimate differences of opinion exist.
14. The dietetics practitioner assumes a life-long responsibility and accountability for personal competence in practice, consistent with accepted professional standards, continually striving to increase professional knowledge and skills and to apply them in practice.
15. The dietetics practitioner is alert to the occurrence of a real or potential conflict of interest and takes appropriate action whenever a conflict arises.
 - a. The dietetics practitioner makes full disclosure of any real or perceived conflict of interest.

- b. When a conflict of interest cannot be resolved by disclosure, the dietetics practitioner takes such other action as may be necessary to eliminate the conflict, including recusal from an office, position, or practice situation.
16. The dietetics practitioner permits the use of his or her name for the purpose of certifying that dietetics services have been rendered only if he or she has provided or supervised the provision of those services.
17. The dietetics practitioner accurately presents professional qualifications and credentials.
- a. The dietetics practitioner, in seeking, maintaining, and using credentials provided by CDR, provides accurate information and complies with all requirements imposed by CDR. The dietetics practitioner uses CDR-awarded credentials (“RD” or “Registered Dietitian”; “DTR” or “Dietetic Technician, Registered”; “CS” or “Certified Specialist”; and “FADA” or “Fellow of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics”) only when the credential is current and authorized by CDR.
 - b. The dietetics practitioner does not aid any other person in violating any CDR requirements, or in representing himself or herself as CDR-credentialed when he or she is not.
18. The dietetics practitioner does not invite, accept, or offer gifts, monetary incentives, or other considerations that affect or reasonably give an appearance of affecting his/her professional judgment.
19. The dietetics practitioner demonstrates respect for the values, rights, knowledge, and skills of colleagues and other professionals.
- a. The dietetics practitioner does not engage in dishonest, misleading, or inappropriate business practices that demonstrate a disregard for the rights or interests of others.
 - b. The dietetics practitioner provides objective evaluations of performance for employees and coworkers, candidates for employment, students, professional association memberships, awards, or scholarships, making all reasonable efforts to avoid bias in the professional evaluation of others.

Accessed from <http://www.eatright.org/codeofethics/> Journal Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, 2009; 109: 1461-1467.

The dietetics practitioner supports and promotes high standards of professional practice. The dietetics practitioner accepts the obligation to protect clients, the public, and the profession by upholding the Code of Ethics for the Profession of Dietetics and by reporting alleged violations of the Code through the defined review process of The American Dietetic Association and its credentialing agency, the Commission on Dietetic Registration.

Part G. Policies and Procedures

Statement of Equal Opportunity

The University of Illinois is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution. It is the policy of the University of Illinois not to engage in discrimination or harassment against any person because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, unfavorable discharge from the military, or status as a disabled veteran of the Vietnam era and comply with all federal and state nondiscrimination, equal opportunity, and affirmative action laws, orders, and regulation (Handbook of Policies and Regulations Applying to All Students).

Admission Requirements

Due to high demand for the DI, it is possible that more than 4 students will be applying for the internship in a given year. Applications will be evaluated by the DI Internal Advisory Committee and acceptance for competitive admission to the DI be based on the following criteria:

- Quality cover letter
- Cumulative GPA (at least above a 3.0), undergraduate, graduate and DPD coursework
- GRE scores - minimum 900 cumulative score for quantitative and verbal
- Volunteer or paid experience in nutrition and dietetics (preferably with registered dietitians in a variety of work settings)
- Quality Letters of Recommendation
- Must be enrolled in a graduate program within the department. Priority to applicants is based on the following:

Degree objective (MS vs. PhD) – *Doctoral students will be given priority*

Thesis or Non-thesis MS – *MS students completing thesis research will be given priority*

Interns are required to have a bachelor's degree and a DPD verification statement from an ACEND accredited program prior to the start of the program.

Program-Associated Costs

If an intern is not being supported by an assistantship, scholarship or fellowship that provides that tuition and fee waiver, they will be responsible for tuition and fees. To view the current costs, please visit the Office of the Registrar's tuition and fee rates page.

In addition, interns are required to pay a fee for participation in the DI. The annual fee is \$2,200. The fee can be paid in one payment prior to beginning the internship or can be divided into two \$1,100 payments paid before the beginning of the fall and spring semesters. Checks should be made to "University of Illinois" and given to the DI Director. After receipt of the payment, students will be cleared to enroll in FSHN 590 and FSHN 591

Other Costs:

- Student membership in the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND) (\$50.00)
- Student membership in the Eastern Illinois Dietetic Association (EIDA) (\$5.00)
- Practice Liability Insurance (~\$24.00)
- TB test between June and August (cost varies)

Professional Membership and Activities

Interns must hold membership in the AND (which automatically confers membership in the Illinois Dietetic Association) and the Eastern Illinois Dietetic Association. They will be required to attend EIDA meetings and participate in the association as part of the requirements for the supervised practice.

Site Selection

It is the policy of the UIUC DI to select new rotation sites based on need or the ability of the site to provide a unique niche to the rotation offerings. The program director will meet with the lead preceptor and review relevant competencies and learning activities appropriate to the site's emphasis area. Scheduling procedures, length of rotation and learning activities will be mutually agreeable to both the PD and primary preceptor. A Standard University of Illinois Externship Agreement must be signed by both parties before interns may be placed in rotation at that site. Site evaluation will occur through intern evaluations and correspondence with the primary preceptor.

Insurance Requirements**Health Insurance**

It is required that the intern carry personal health insurance.

Professional Liability Insurance Requirements

Interns are required to purchase the following professional liability insurance for activities associated with supervised practice: \$1,000,000 per incident/occurrence and \$3,000,000 annual aggregate. Professional liability insurance may be purchased through the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics at: <http://academypersonalinsurance.com/BusinessInsurance/ProfessionalLiabilityInsurance.aspx>.

Liability for Safety in Travel To and From Assigned Areas

Interns are responsible for securing their own transportation. Interns assume their own liability for safety in travel to all experiential learning sites, field trips, and to and from UIUC or other required facilities for classes and meetings. Each intern is also responsible for his/her own transportation as well as personal automobile insurance. The University does not provide automobile liability or cover automobile physical damage for interns driving themselves or other interns to university sponsored field trips. Automobile insurance policies held by the interns are the primary and only policies covering them for injuries to themselves and others, as well as damage to their vehicles or other vehicles. Interns must follow parking guidelines at each facility as well as the University. Interns are financially responsible for all parking fees.

Immunizations

Interns must provide evidence of being current on all necessary vaccinations and must have a negative tuberculosis test result in the past 3 months.

Injury or Illness While in a Facility for Supervised Practice

If injury or illness occurs en route to or while working in a supervised practice facility and immediate medical care is required, the student must follow guidelines contained in the student's health insurance policy. Any expenses incurred for illness/injury during the supervised practice and graduate school hours are the student's responsibility.

In case of illness, the student must notify the affiliated facility no later than 30 minutes prior to scheduled duty. The Internship Director should also be notified on the same day.

Drug Testing and Criminal Background Checks**Criminal Background Checks**

A criminal background check is required for all interns. Background checks will be completed through the Illinois Bureau of Investigation. Results of this background check will be maintained in the Dietetic Internship program's electronic files. This information will be available to all rotation sites.

Some rotation sites require that results of the criminal background check be reviewed by the facility before an intern may be allowed on the premises. If the intern has a criminal history, it will be at the discretion of the receiving institution to determine if the infringement is of such significance that the intern will NOT be allowed to train in the facility. If an intern is rejected from facilities based on the criminal background check and the Dietetic Internship program has no rotation sites that will allow the intern to complete their rotations, the intern will be notified and dismissed from the program. Issues related to background checks will be discussed with interns once the background check has been completed so that problems may be resolved at the start of the program.

Drug Testing

Interns will be required to submit to drug screens as required by the individual sites. FAILURE OF A DRUG SCREEN WILL RESULT IN AUTOMATIC TERMINATION FROM THE PROGRAM.

Replacement of Employees during Supervised Practice Experiences

The purpose of a dietetic internship is NOT to replace employees in a facility. All facilities used in rotations have been advised of this policy and have agreed to abide by the policy. This is not to say that interns cannot help out when needed in a facility or provide staff relief, but this should be done under supervision of the facility preceptors, should further a student's ability to complete their learning activities and build entry-level competence, and should never displace a person from their employment in the facility. Interns should not be asked to perform tasks that detract from their ability to complete the rotation learning activities.

Compensation

The UIUC Dietetic Internship does not provide compensation to interns.

Process for Filing and Handling Complaints

It is the policy of the UIUC DI that interns have a right to redress their grievances without retaliation. The Program Director is the primary focus for problem-solving. Problems at a site or with a preceptor should be discussed with the Internship Director as soon as possible. However, it is expected that interns cultivate cordial, professional relationships with the preceptor at the outset of any rotation.

Interns must first discuss the issue with the Site Preceptor, and attempt to resolve before bringing it up with the Internship Director. If an issue is not resolved to an intern's satisfaction after discussing the matter in a mature fashion with both the Site Preceptor and the Internship Director, the intern may request a formal review by the Chair of the Department of Health and Human Performance.

The following is the complete order in which a grievance may be reviewed:

- a. Site preceptor
- b. University of Illinois Dietetic Internship Director
- c. FSHN Department Chair
- d. Dean of the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences

It is the responsibility of the Dietetic Internship program director to maintain a list of intern and/or preceptor complaints for seven years, including the resolution specified for each complaint.

Complaints Related to ACEND Accreditation Standards

Interns or preceptors who have a complaint related to Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) standards may submit the complaint to the Internship director and/or Nutrition Department chair at any time. If options for resolution of the complaint with the program and institution have been exhausted, the intern or preceptor should submit the complaint to ACEND. ACEND will review complaints that relate to a program's compliance with accreditation standards. ACEND is interested in assuring the quality and integrity of the educational programs that it accredits. However, ACEND does not intervene on behalf of individuals or act as a court of appeal for individuals in matters of admissions, appointment, promotion or dismissal of faculty, staff or students. It acts only upon a signed allegation that the program may not be in compliance with the accreditation standards or policies. The complaint must be signed by the complainant, and submitted to ACEND at:

<https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/public-notices-and-announcements/filing-a-complaint-with-acend>.

Assessment of prior learning

It is the policy of the UIUC DI to grant credit for prior learning to interns who can provide documentation of significant work experiences that comprise the same types of learning experiences as required by the ACEND competency statements in particular emphasis areas. Students must provide written explanation/documentation of work experiences as well as corroborating information from the immediate supervisor of those work experiences. No credit will be extended for clinical hours and only hours which meet or exceed the number of required hours for a particular rotation will be considered. Final determination of assessment of prior learning is at the discretion of the internship director. Interns must apply for prior learning assessment before the beginning of internship rotations.

Assessment of Intern Learning and Performance Monitoring

UIUC dietetic interns receive written and verbal evaluations throughout the program and specifically at the conclusion of each rotation. At the conclusion of a rotation, the preceptor completes a standardized evaluation form and a competency evaluation form to document intern performance and progress.

At the beginning of the internship, during orientation week, each intern will receive copies of rotation evaluation forms and projects/assignments. It is the responsibility of each intern to be familiar with all internship forms and the guidelines for projects/assignments and evaluation forms so that he/she is aware of the criteria and timing for each. Interns are expected to complete all projects/assignments and learning activities on time with a high degree of accuracy and thoroughness. All evaluations are to be completed by the designated preceptor and intern at the completion of each rotation. Rotation documents list required learning activities and performance standards. Rotation evaluations are completed mid-rotation (in all rotations longer than 6 weeks) and at the end of each rotation. Preceptors use the evaluation to mark “Exceeds Entry-Level”, “Meets Entry-Level” or “Below Entry-Level” for the intern’s accomplishment of each learning activity.

All completed evaluation forms will be submitted to the internship director for review. All learning activities must be scored as “meets entry-level” or “exceeds entry-level” in order for a student to successfully complete a rotation AND all rotations must be satisfactorily completed to receive a Verification Statement for completion of the dietetic internship. There are numerous projects/assignments interns will complete throughout the internship. Additionally, interns must track all supervised practice hours using the weekly log and hours tracking form which is reviewed by the internship director. Interns are expected to attend all scheduled events and complete all rotation hours as determined by the preceptor. All evaluations, projects, logs, and assignments are required to be uploaded into the interns individual online portfolio.

All interns meet regularly with the Dietetic Internship program director, at least once a month. The internship director will use weekly logs, rotation evaluation forms, competency evaluation forms, assignments, and monthly meetings to monitor performance throughout the internship. The internship director will use this information to intervene early and often if difficulties emerge before they become significant.

Program Retention and Remediation

The expectation for all interns accepted to the UIUC Dietetic Internship is to successfully complete the program as eligible entry-level, competent, registered dietitian nutritionists. Interns must complete learning activities and objectives independently with supervision, but skill building will be provided whenever possible to help interns succeed. It is the responsibility of the Dietetic Internship director to work with interns who struggle in rotations or who may need more assistance in meeting learning objectives. The program director will meet regularly with interns to assess progress and identify a course of action if remediation is needed. If interns need additional services outside of the program, they will be advised to access the University’s student support services, including the health center and counseling services, veteran and military student center services, a writing center and financial aid resources.

If remediation is unsuccessful, if intern performance is unacceptable in too many areas or if the intern determines they are unlikely to be successful, the intern will be counseled on other career paths. The internship director will recommend the intern visit the UIUC Career Center and/or FSHN Department faculty advisors for assistance in determining other career options.

Supervised Practice Documentation

Interns must complete weekly logs documenting their activities and competencies each week. In addition, the interns must complete hours tracking form each week. These must be submitted to the internship director no later than the Monday following the completed week by 5PM. Hours spent working on case studies, simulation, or role playing does not count towards supervised practice hours. If the intern was granted hours for prior learning, an hours tracking form needs to be completed and a log describing the activities completed to receive the hours of prior learning also needs to be completed and turned into the internship director for the interns file.

Discipline and Termination

Interns must abide by all professional standards and policies outlined within this manual and the general UIUC Student Handbook. Failure to act in accordance with professional standards will result in a formal review by the Dietetic Internship Director and the FSHN Department Chair. Violations will be addressed on an individual case basis and may result in a dismissal from the program.

It is the policy of the UIUC-DI that interns may be disciplined or terminated from the program as outlined below:

Interns may be disciplined by:

- a. termination from the program (see below)
- b. suspension for a time commensurate with the offense
- c. suspension for remediation of knowledge or other aspects of performance as determined by the Internship Director

Interns may be terminated from the program for the following causes:

- a. Repeated poor performance
- b. Not following instructions as requested
- c. Repeated absenteeism or tardiness
- d. Unprofessional or unethical conduct or violating the policies of the internship as set forth in this document or the intern's signed contract
- e. Two rotation failures
- f. Non-payment of tuition and fees or Internship Fee
- g. Failure to pass drug screen or background check
- h. Other reasons as set forth in the signed contract

In cases of major infraction, interns may be immediately dismissed from the program without previous warning. Repeated infractions or uncorrected conduct may also result in dismissal. The following are examples of actions considered serious enough to warrant immediate dismissal. This list is not inclusive.

- Theft
- Assault
- Endangering the life of a patient
- Arson, vandalism or any criminal act
- Insubordination
- Drug abuse or drinking alcohol while on duty

- Falsification of records
- Mental or physical abuse of a patient
- 3 days absence without notice to preceptor and dietetic internship director
- Unauthorized release of information
- Unauthorized use of facility property
- Unprofessional behavior such as lying, verbal attack on another person, sexual harassment or inappropriate sexual activity
- Failure to comply with the Code of Ethics of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
- Plagiarism, omission of references, or failure to indicate the source for any work.
- Grievance for removal from the UIUC DI must be initiated within 90 days of dismissal from the program

Program Completion Requirements and Maximum Time Allowed for Completion of Internship

To complete the UIUC Dietetic Internship, interns must successfully complete all rotation, project/assignments, attendance, and behavior requirements and follow all policies and procedures of the Dietetic Internship. Once the intern successfully completes the program and completes graduate program requirements, the Dietetic Internship director will provide the intern with the prescribed number of Verification Statements at the conclusion of the last day of the internship. Within one week of graduate program and dietetic internship program requirements, the Dietetic Internship director will also enter the intern into the Registration Eligibility Processing System (REPS) as eligible to take the Registration Examination for Dietitians.

Completion of all program requirements (graduate and DI) must occur within 150% of the time planned for program completion.

- a. For the MS degree, typically 24 months is allotted for coursework and research and 9 months of the interns for a total of 33 months. Therefore, all program requirements must be met within 50 months, which is within the 60 month (5 year) time limit for degree completion established by the University of Illinois Graduate College.
- b. For the PhD degree, typically 48 to 60 months is allotted for coursework and research and 9 months of the interns for a total of 57-69 months. Therefore, all program requirements must be met within 86-103 months. The 150% time for planned program exceeds the 84-month (7 year) time limit for doctoral degree completion established by the University of Illinois Graduate College. Therefore, a petition for a time extension must be submitted to the Graduate College, if a doctoral student were to exceed the 7 year time limit for the doctoral degree.

Verification Statements

Verifications will be provided to the intern after evidence of completion of the graduate degree requirements and on-line submission of the thesis or dissertation. Original signed copies of the verification statements remain on file at UIUC indefinitely.

Non-completion of Internship

In all cases, interns who do not complete the internship program successfully within a one year period are subject to dismissal from the program and forfeiture of tuition fees.

Withdrawal and Refund of Tuition and Fees

Tuition payment is due in full prior to the start of the supervised practice rotations. Tuition is non-refundable regardless of the reason for non-completion of the program

Professional Standards for Interns

Interns enrolled in the Dietetic Internship are expected to exhibit professionalism in demeanor, dress, attitude, and behaviors that shows respect for fellow interns, faculty, preceptors, administrators and all persons encountered while completing supervised practice.

Program Schedule, Attendance, and Leaves

The UIUC Dietetic Internship is an 8-month (32-week) program that provides more than the minimum required 1,200 hours of supervised practice. The program starts in late August and runs through mid-April. The rotation schedule is provided to interns during orientation and varies by intern to accommodate all rotations across interns. Contact the Dietetic Internship Program Director for exact internship program dates.

Attendance

Interns are expected to participate in learning experiences according to the schedule provided during program orientation. Interns are expected to work holidays and occasional evenings during their rotations. Attendance is mandatory for all rotations, scheduled events, and monthly classes with the internship director.

Excused Absences

In the event of a verifiable illness or emergency, the intern must notify the preceptor and program director prior to the scheduled day. The intern and preceptor will arrange for hours to make up the missed time. The intern will inform the program director of this arrangement prior to the make-up time. Accommodations for an absence due to sincerely held religious beliefs will be made and considered an excused absence. Interns are responsible for notifying the program director during orientation of any planned absence related to sincerely held religious beliefs. The intern and preceptor will arrange for alternative hours to make up the missed time. The intern will inform the program director of this arrangement prior to the make-up time.

Unexcused Absences

Any missed rotation hours for a reason other than an excused absence, or lack of timely notification for an excused absence to the preceptor and program director is considered an unexcused absence. This

would result in an “Unsatisfactory” evaluation in a rotation. It is up to the program director to determine if and how such an absence may be remediated.

Closure of the University campus does not correlate directly with cancellation of rotation experiences. Some rotations will close with inclement weather while others will not close. The intern must contact the preceptor and Internship Director if there is inclement weather that affects the intern’s ability to attend the rotation.

Failure to report to supervised practice rotations and/or arriving late or leaving early without approval of the preceptor is unacceptable professional behavior and will result in disciplinary action. It is considered a significant and serious infraction. Arriving late for three days during a rotation is counted as an unexcused absence. Timely attendance at all rotations and Monday seminar is a condition of successfully completing rotations.

Holiday and Vacation Leave

The dietetic internship program includes scheduled holiday and vacation leave. Interns are expected to work holidays and occasional evenings if a rotation assignment or experience requires it. Each intern receives three weeks of vacation during the program, which includes two weeks in late December. The additional week is determined by the rotation schedule, which varies across interns. Individual requests will try to be honored, but are not guaranteed. No other vacation time is included, nor allowed, during the internship.

Sick Leave

Interns are allowed a total of 2 days of sick leave during the program. Interns must contact the program director and preceptor when taking sick leave. Interns will be required to make up hours missed when the program director, clinical instructor, and/or preceptor deem it necessary to complete the objectives of the rotation. Time missed due to illness in excess of 2 days must be made up. It is the responsibility of the intern to coordinate with the rotation preceptor and program director to arrange and complete any missed time.

Leave of Absence

If an intern needs to take a leave of absence of longer than two weeks from participation in the program for medical or personal reasons, a leave of absence request must be submitted in writing to the program director for approval. The request must include the reason for the leave of absence, any relevant documentation (e.g., physician note), estimated time frame for the leave, and expected date of return to the program. Following an approved leave of absence, an intern will only be readmitted to the program if it is logistically possible and if the intern took their leave of absence while in good standing with the program. All competencies of the program must be met to receive a verification statement.

Professional Ethics and Behavior

Professional, ethical conduct is expected at all times. Professional behavior includes being prompt, alert, and prepared for all class sessions and site experiences. Students are guests of the facility. Preceptors at the facility teach to contribute to and further the profession of dietetics. Your placement is a privilege, not a right. It is expected that all interns know and adhere to The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Code of Ethics at all times. See **Section F**.

Interns are expected to honor the affiliation contract, agreed-upon hours, scheduled dates and times, and duties, even if they slightly exceed the minimum number of hours allotted to that rotation. Rotation-hours are work hours and do not include the time for meals, breaks, writing time and conferences with the Internship Director.

Completion of the objectives is each intern's responsibility. Actively seek and meet each rotation's goals and objectives. In the event that a student in the Dietetic Internship fails to fulfill responsibilities, is absent or late without cause and/or proper notification, lacks initiative, takes on responsibilities with authority, violates confidentiality of patient or client or in any other way behaves in an unprofessional or unethical manner, action shall be taken to dismiss the student from the Dietetic Internship. We may discuss certain issues that are scientifically and ethically controversial. It is expected that each person will allow other's opinions to be heard in a fair and orderly manner. Opinions should be discussed in an objective manner, without passing judgment on the person as a whole. The same respect should be extended to patients and clients you come into contact with. For example, you should refer to a person who has elevated blood sugar as "a person who has diabetes," not "a diabetic."

Professional Appearance

Students are expected to follow the dress code policies and procedures at each facility. It is the responsibility of the intern to know the dress code and the responsibility of the facility to enforce the policy.

The following are guidelines that indicate professional attire:

All interns: Wear a name badge at all times. Students should be clean, neat and well groomed at all times. Gum chewing is not allowed. Smoke only in designated areas. Hairnets and/or caps must be worn in foodservice areas. Avoid wearing strong perfumes or colognes. No gym shoes, except clean white athletic shoes are acceptable for the foodservice rotation.

Men: Conservative front-button shirts with slacks and dress shoes. A clean white lab coat is also necessary.

Women: Acceptable: business casual street clothes (e.g., dress, skirt or pants with blouse or sweater) with a clean white lab coat. Not acceptable: sundresses without jackets, very short skirts, t-shirts, shorts, sweatshirts, jeans, bare midriffs. Shoes need to be comfortable for walking, but no clogs, sandals, thongs, or other open-toe shoes.

Check with the Dietetic Internship Director and/or Preceptor if you have any questions concerning the dress code for a particular rotation site. In all cases, follow the dress code outlined by the facility you are working in.

Elective Rotations

UIUC dietetic interns pursue two weeks of an elective rotation in an area related to their interests. Elective rotations provide interns the opportunity to explore areas of their own choosing. All elective rotation experiences must be in a supervised practice setting related to the practice of nutrition and must be approved by the Dietetic Internship director. A list of approved elective rotations with

preceptors is available. In addition, interns may investigate elective rotation options using their own contacts and guidance from the Dietetic Internship director.

After interns are accepted in the UIUC Dietetic Internship, the program director will send them a complete description of the elective rotation and a list of potential elective rotation experiences available. If the intern creates their own elective rotation options, they must contact potential sites to determine the feasibility of the two-week elective rotation. All elective rotations need an affiliation agreement in place before starting the rotation.

Protection of Privacy Information and Access to Personal Files

It is the policy of the University to comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). Through implementation of this Act, the student's record will not be released without consent of the student, except for documented conditions (Handbook of Policies and Regulations Applying to All Students). Intern files are accessible only by the intern, in addition to university personnel associated with the program. Interns will be required to sign a form agreeing to allow ACEND access to their official transcripts in the case of a random audit.

Confidentiality of Medical Records

Interns will have access to confidential medical records and client interviews. *FAILURE TO DO SO CAN RESULT IN DISMISSAL FROM THE PROGRAM.* Under no circumstance should you disclose any private information or discuss cases in such a way that would identify an individual person, his or her family. *DO NOT DISCUSS PATIENTS IN PUBLIC AREAS SUCH AS CAFETERIAS, ELEVATORS, RESTROOMS, ETC.* DISCUSS PATIENTS ONLY IN STAFF-SECURED AREAS WITH APPROPRIATE PERSONNEL.

Interns will follow the standards as set forth in HIPPA at all times. A medical record or chart is a legal document that can be used as evidence in a Court of Law. Documentation must follow the guidelines outlined by the facility. If you have any questions, ask the Program Director, Preceptor or the facilities HIPPA representative

Access to Intern Information

Privacy of Intern Information

All intern information is protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Intern records will be kept in locked files or in password protected computers files. Access is limited to specific faculty members for academic purposes on a "need-to-know" basis. All preceptors will be trained on FERPA and the need to maintain confidentiality with respect to intern performance.

Intern Access to Their Information

All interns have the right to review their file and to inspect all documents contained therein. Interns need to schedule an appointment with the program director for access to this information.

Access to Student Support Services

Information on various student support services available at the University of Illinois (health services, counseling and testing, financial aid resources, etc.) may be found on the UIUC Student Resources webpage.

Student Agreement Form

MY SIGNATURE BELOW VERIFIES THAT I HAVE:

- 1) READ THIS HANDBOOK
- 2) UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENT
- 3) WILL COMPLY WITH ITS CONTENT.

DATE

SIGNATURE