

2021 ANNUAL ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT REPORT FORM
(Due October 15 to the dean)**PROGRAM SECTION (Due to the dean on October 15)****Submission date:** 10/15/2021**Submitted by:** Carrie King, Professor, Dietetics and Nutrition, cdking@alaska.edu**Program(s) covered in this report:** Dietetics & Nutrition MS

If you selected "Other" above, please identify. (100 characters or less) N/A

College: College of Health**Campuses where the program(s) is delivered:** ☒ Anchorage ☐ KOD ☐ KPC ☐ MSC ☐ PWSC**Specialized accrediting agency (if applicable):** Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics

If explanation is necessary, such as only some of the certificates and degrees are covered by the specialized accreditation, briefly describe: There are two tracks in the MS Dietetics & Nutrition. The pre-registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN) track, a combination of courses and supervised experiential learning, is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND), as of December 2020. The current RDN track, which requires coursework only, is accredited by NWCCU.

INSTITUTIONAL STUDENT LEARNING CORE COMPETENCIES

In 2020, UAA launched a consensus-based, deliberative process to identify the key skillsets that help students achieve academic and post-graduation success. After a year-long process that included students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, and employers, the UAA community identified four "core competencies" at the heart of a quality UAA education. Students develop mastery of these competencies through curricular (e.g., courses), co-curricular (e.g., internships, conferences), and extra-curricular (e.g., student clubs) learning experiences.

After the stakeholder-based process in AY20, UAA conducted a pilot project focusing on the core competency of Personal, Professional, and Community Responsibility (PPCR). This decision was based on input from the 2020 Annual Academic Assessment Retreat.

Question #1 below is designed to engage program faculty in thinking about how they can or already do promote student learning in this core competency.

1. Personal, Professional, and Community Responsibility: The knowledge and skills necessary to promote personal flourishing, professional excellence, and community engagement.

- **What would you hope a student would say if asked where in your program or support service they had the opportunity to develop proficiency in this Core Competency? (500 characters or less)**

Our students are either seeking credentialing for entry-level practice or are currently practicing as registered dietitian nutritionists (RDNs). The RDN profession is closely governed by a code of ethics, entry-level education and continuing professional education requirements, and legal statutes. We hope that graduates of our program would report a knowledge of and appreciation for how to navigate and apply all of these regulations, and a personal responsibility to ensure they do.

- **Do you have an example that could be a model for the university of an intentionally designed course, assignment, or activity that showcases the student learning in this core competency? ☒ Yes ☐ No**

If yes, please briefly describe. (500 characters or less)

The code of ethics for the profession for the nutrition and dietetics professions is woven through many assignments to ensure students have a thorough understanding of these requirements. In DN A650 The Business of Dietetics, students complete an ethics case study, in a live class, that challenges them to consider the ethics of recommending, or not, a university foodservice operation transition to plastic reusable containers to replace disposable containers.

- **Do you have any ideas about where your program or the university might develop other intentionally designed opportunities for students to develop proficiency in this core competency? ☒ Yes ☐ No**

If yes, please briefly describe. (500 characters or less)

Professional ethics could be a standing part of the College of Health interdisciplinary simulation learning opportunities.

PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

2. Please list the Program Student Learning Outcomes your program assessed in AY21. For each outcome, indicate one of the following: Exceeded faculty expectations, Met faculty expectations, or Did not meet faculty expectations.

Example: Communicate effectively in a variety of contexts and formats – Exceeded faculty expectations.

1. Integrate and apply scientific information and research into practice - Met faculty expectations

2. Exhibit beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviors that are at the professional dietitian level of practice - Met faculty expectations
3. Provide clinical and customer services by developing and delivering information, products and services to individuals, groups and populations - Met faculty expectations
4. Utilize strategic application of principles of management and systems in the provision of services to individuals and organizations - Met faculty expectations
5. Demonstrate an understanding of Alaska Native culture and Alaska's unique healthcare delivery system- Met faculty expectations

3. Describe your assessment process in AY21 for these program student learning outcomes, including the collection of data, analysis of data, and faculty (and other, e.g., advisory board) conversations around the findings. (750 characters or less)

Summative assessment methods include exams, final course grades, presentations, projects, case studies, final research manuscripts and final supervised practice rotation evaluations. Students evaluate each course and rotation to provide feedback to the instructors and preceptors. At the end of each academic year, the program director collects the aggregate results, completes data analysis and prepares a summary report which is the basis for discussion at the year-end advisory board meeting about program strengths and weaknesses, and changes that will be implemented in the next academic year. At the start of each academic year the DN faculty discuss assessment results and plans for continuous program improvement.

4. What are the findings and what do they tell the faculty about student learning in your program? (750 characters or less)

For the pre-RDN track, the RDN exam one-year pass rate is 90.9%, exceeding the national rate, indicating program graduates are well-prepared to meet the entry-level credentialing requirements. Only 25% of students who completed DN A630 Applied Research Methods in DN were ready, at the conclusion of the fall 2020 semester, to defend their research proposals and submit an IRB proposal. Progression through the research process continues to be a challenge for students in our program. The mean final exam score for DN A642 Advanced Medical Nutrition Therapy was five points higher in spring 2021, as compared to spring 2020, indicating changes made to convert the clinical simulations to a virtual format didn't hinder student learning.

5. Based on the findings, did the faculty make any recommendations for changes to improve student achievement of the program student learning outcomes? Please describe the recommended action, what improvement in student learning the program hopes to see with this change, the proposed timeline, and how the program will know if the change has worked. If no recommendations for changes were made, please explain that decision. (750 Characters or less)

Many changes were made to the program curriculum in AY21 as a result of a major change in the external accreditation format. These changes will be implemented in AY22-AY23, including a reordering of the research coursework sequence and updating all course content, including DN A630

Applied Research Methods in DN. It is hoped that this will result in improvements in the quality of research writing and research progression in a timely manner. The virtual clinical simulations will be continued, as this format supported and enhanced student success and will prepare graduates for telehealth opportunities that are increasing in the dietetics profession.

PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS AND ASSESSING IMPACT ON STUDENT LEARNING

- 6. In the past academic year, how did your program use the results of previous assessment cycles to make changes intended to improve student achievement of the program student learning outcomes? Please check all that apply.**

- ☒ Course curriculum changes
- ☐ Course prerequisite changes
- ☒ Changes in teaching methods
- ☐ Changes in advising
- ☒ Degree requirement changes
- ☒ Degree course sequencing
- ☐ Course enrollment changes (e.g., course capacity, grading structure [pass/fail, A-F])
- ☐ Changes in program policies/procedures
- ☐ Changes to Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)
- ☐ College-wide initiatives (e.g., High Impact Practices)
- ☐ Faculty, staff, student development
- ☐ Other
- ☐ No changes were implemented in AY21.

If you checked "Other" above, please describe. (100 characters or less)

N/A

- 7. Do you have any information about how well these or other past improvements are working? Are they achieving their intended goals? Please include any data or assessment results that help you demonstrate this. (750 characters or less)**

It is anticipated that moving DN A630 Applied Research Methods to the spring semester and updating the curriculum will enable students to be better prepared for research proposal writing in spring 2022 and progress through the program research timeline. These changes in the research curriculum and program requirements build on previous improvements (i.e., assignments, research advising) that have been helpful but are not yet generating the desired progression through the research timeline and improvements in research writing quality. In DN A642 Advanced Medical Nutrition Therapy a change in teaching methods from using VoiceThread to using student presentations during Zoom for a pharmaceutical assignment generated positive student feedback.

8. Programs are not required to respond to question #8 below for their report due on October 15, 2021. Question #8 will be required for the next round and moving forward.
9. Do you have any examples of post-graduate success you want to highlight? For example, major scholarships, the percent of students who pass licensure examinations, the percent of students accepted to graduate programs, the percent in post-graduation employment in the field or a related field. (750 characters or less)

The Dietetics and Nutrition program was started to meet Alaska's workforce needs. While urban job openings are routinely and quickly filled by program graduates, rural openings can remain unfilled for more than two years. A program graduate was hired to fill a rural RDN opening in summer 2020 and will be precepting a current student in January 2022. This is an example of program mission and goal fulfillment.

DEAN SECTION (Due to the program on January 15)

1. Based on the program's responses above, what guidance and support do you have for the program moving forward? Is there a particular area the program should focus on? (750 characters or less)

The program is commended for using the assessment process to make curricular and/or course sequencing changes to support both the attainment of academic goals and timely student matriculation. This can be a challenging balance in graduate programs and it is appreciated that the program continues to assess how changes are impacting desired outcomes. The assessment of student learning after changing from F2F to virtual simulation is critical in ensuring that changes in modality produce at least as good of results as the original format. At this time, the program is approaching the final stages of major changes based on accreditation standard requirements; implementing and continuing to evaluate those changes will be the priority.

2. Is there something the program is doing particularly well in terms of its processes for the assessment and improvement of student learning, including the closing of equity gaps, that might serve as a model for other programs? If yes, please explain. You may skip this question. (750 characters or less)

It is appreciated that the program includes assessment not only of overall job placement of graduates, but also the ability to fill the rural health workforce need and looks for creative ways to increase the likelihood of graduates working in rural Alaska.

Dean's signature:



Date: 12/29/2021