

The Graduate Program in Nutrition

Graduate Manual: A Guide to Success



UNC GREENSBORO

Department of Nutrition

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I. INTRODUCTION

This handbook provides information about the policies, procedures, expectations, and degree requirements of the Graduate Program in Nutrition at UNCG. It supplements the graduate regulations and policies described in the [University Catalog](#). Students should consult the Graduate Program Director with questions or when clarification is needed regarding the content of this handbook.

The handbook focuses on requirements and expectations specific to graduate students in the Department of Nutrition. The coursework, research requirements, and program milestones described here represent the shared foundation established by the faculty for graduate training in nutrition. Because students enter the program with different academic backgrounds, research interests, and professional goals, advisors and advisory committees may recommend additional coursework, research experiences, or professional training to support an individual student's development. These decisions should be made through ongoing consultation among the student, advisor, and committee members.

Students are expected to read this handbook carefully and use it as a reference throughout their program. They are also responsible for reviewing applicable Graduate School and university policies and for understanding the requirements, procedures, and deadlines associated with their degree.

Graduate education is a collaborative process, but students are expected to take the lead in monitoring their progress, planning for upcoming milestones, and seeking guidance when needed. Advisors, committee members, the Graduate Program Director, and other program faculty are available to provide support regarding coursework, research, professional development, and degree completion.

We are pleased to welcome you to the Department of Nutrition and look forward to supporting your success in graduate study.

II. THE DEPARTMENT'S MULTIDISCIPLINARY MISSION

The Department of Nutrition offers graduate programs leading to the Master of Science non-thesis, Master of Science thesis, Master of Science Dietetic Internship, Post-Baccalaureate Certificate – Dietetic Internship Program, and Doctor of Philosophy degrees. Nutrition is a broad and multidisciplinary field that draws on biological, behavioral, clinical, public health, policy, agricultural, and social perspectives. Graduate study in nutrition therefore requires a strong foundation in the chemistry, metabolism, and biological functions of nutrients, along with an understanding of how nutrition science is applied in clinical practice, public health, policy, and community settings.

The Graduate Program in Nutrition is grounded in rigorous nutrition science and evidence-based practice. Students are expected to develop an understanding of nutrient metabolism and function, diet–disease relationships, and the use of research to inform practice, policy, and population health. The program also provides flexibility for students to develop expertise in supporting disciplines and to pursue individualized academic, research, and professional goals.

III. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Student

Graduate education is a collaborative process; however, students are expected to take primary responsibility for their academic and professional development. Students are responsible for understanding and complying with the policies, requirements, deadlines, and procedures described in this manual, the UNCG Graduate School policies, and other applicable university regulations.

Students are expected to monitor their academic progress, communicate regularly with their advisor, and seek guidance from their advisor, committee members, the Graduate Program Director, or other appropriate university resources whenever questions or concerns arise. Early communication is strongly encouraged if academic, personal, or professional circumstances may affect progress toward the degree.

The Graduate Compact (Appendix A) further describes the shared expectations and responsibilities of graduate students, faculty advisors, and the graduate program.

B. Advisor

The Graduate Program Director serves as the academic advisor for M.S. non-thesis students. M.S. Dietetic Internship students are advised by the Graduate Program Director and the Dietetic Internship Director. M.S. thesis and Ph.D. students are assigned a faculty advisor before entering the program, based on the student's stated research interests, professional goals, and alignment with faculty expertise. Current faculty profiles, research interests, and contact information are available through the Department website, as described in **Appendix B**.

The advisor's primary role is to guide the student through the degree process. This includes advising the student on course selection, degree requirements, research direction, professional development, and career goals. For thesis and dissertation students, the advisor also provides direction throughout the development of the research proposal, conduct of the research, and preparation of the thesis or dissertation. Advisors are expected to provide constructive feedback on drafts and to support the student's development as a scholarly and professional writer.

Students and advisors should communicate regularly and meet as often as needed to support timely progress toward the degree. At a minimum, students should meet with their advisor near the beginning and end of each semester to review current progress, upcoming requirements, and academic or research goals. Students are responsible for initiating meetings and should schedule appointments in advance whenever possible.

The advisor–student relationship should be professional, respectful, and collaborative. Both parties are expected to communicate clearly, address concerns in a timely manner, and follow the expectations described in the Graduate Compact in Appendix A.

C. The Non-thesis/Thesis/Dissertation Advisory Committee

The advisory committee supports the student's academic progress, research development, and professional training. Committee members provide guidance based on their areas of expertise, evaluate the student's proposed program of study when required, and help ensure that degree requirements and appropriate academic standards are met.

For M.S. non-thesis and M.S. Dietetic Internship students, the Graduate Committee serves as the advisory committee. The Graduate Committee reviews requests to apply coursework outside the standard requirements or approved elective options reflected in Degree Works.

M.S. thesis and Ph.D. students form a Thesis or Dissertation Committee in consultation with their primary faculty advisor. Committee members should be selected based on the expertise they can contribute to the student's research, academic development, professional goals, and availability. Members may assist with refining research questions, study design, methodology, data interpretation, scholarly writing, and other technical or conceptual aspects of the thesis or dissertation.

An M.S. Thesis Committee consists of at least three members, and a Ph.D. Dissertation Committee consists of at least four members, in accordance with Graduate School requirements. The chair of a Ph.D. Dissertation Committee must hold the appropriate Graduate Faculty status required by the Graduate School. With approval, one committee member may be selected from outside the Department of Nutrition or UNCG when that individual provides relevant expertise not otherwise represented on the committee.

M.S. thesis and Ph.D. students should begin discussing potential committee members with their primary advisor during the first semester and should establish the committee before the dissertation proposal for Ph.D. students and within the first semester of the second year for M.S. thesis students. Students are responsible for initiating communication with committee members and consulting them as needed throughout the development and completion of their research.

The committee and student should maintain regular, professional communication. Although the primary advisor typically provides the most frequent guidance, students are encouraged to draw on the expertise of all committee members rather than limiting consultation to formal proposal and defense meetings.

D. Graduate Program Director

The Graduate Program Director oversees and coordinates the Department of Nutrition's graduate programs. The Graduate Program Director's responsibilities include graduate student recruitment and admissions, coordination of departmental assistantships and other funding assignments, orientation of new students, oversight of teaching assignments and student workspace, and administration of departmental graduate policies and procedures.

The Graduate Program Director also serves as a resource for enrolled students regarding degree requirements, academic progress, research training, professional development, and other matters related to the graduate program. Students who experience concerns involving their advisor, committee, or program progress may consult the Graduate Program Director for guidance and assistance. Such concerns will be handled with appropriate discretion, although complete confidentiality cannot always be guaranteed when further action is necessary.

The Graduate Program Director serves as Chair of the Graduate Committee and as an *ex officio* member of the Nutrition Graduate Student Association.

E. Graduate Committee

The Nutrition Graduate Committee consists of at least three members of the Graduate Faculty and is chaired by the Graduate Program Director. The committee is responsible for developing, reviewing, and implementing policies, procedures, and curricular changes for the Department of Nutrition's graduate programs in accordance with Graduate School and university requirements.

The Graduate Committee reviews and evaluates applications for admission to the graduate programs and considers student requests that require departmental approval, including requests for course substitutions, exceptions to standard degree requirements, and the use of coursework not otherwise reflected in Degree Works, primarily for M.S. non-thesis students. For M.S. thesis and Ph.D. students, such requests are generally reviewed by the student's appointed advisory committee. For M.S. non-thesis students, the Graduate Committee also serves as the advisory committee for academic matters requiring faculty review beyond routine advising by the Graduate Program Director. Upon request from a thesis or dissertation committee chair, the Graduate Committee assists in reviewing and resolving procedural or academic issues that arise during the thesis or dissertation process. The committee may also consider other matters related to graduate curriculum, student progress, and program administration as needed.

F. The Nutrition Graduate Student Association

The Nutrition Graduate Student Association is open to all graduate students in the Department of Nutrition. The association is led by six elected officers: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Public Relations/Media Chair, and Service Event Coordinator. The Graduate Program Director serves as an *ex officio* member.

The association supports graduate students through professional development, networking, service, social activities, and opportunities to pursue or distribute student funding. It also provides a regular forum for graduate students to raise concerns, share ideas, and discuss issues that may affect their academic progress, professional development, or overall experience in the program.

When appropriate, the association may engage faculty or program leadership in these discussions to help identify solutions, improve communication, and strengthen the graduate student experience.

IV. GRADUATE REGULATIONS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES

A. Degree Works

Degree Works is the official degree planning and audit system used by the Department of Nutrition and The Graduate School to track students' progress toward degree completion. Each graduate program includes a prescribed curriculum of required core courses, research or practicum requirements (where applicable), and elective coursework that supports the student's area of study. Degree Works provides students and advisors with an up-to-date record of completed and remaining degree requirements throughout the program.

Students are responsible for reviewing their Degree Works audit regularly and should consult with their advisor or the Graduate Program Director regarding course selection, elective options, transfer credit, substitutions, or other questions related to degree progress. Current degree requirements for each graduate program are available through the UNCG Academic Catalog.

B. Plan of Study and Degree Works Exceptions

Degree Works reflects the curriculum and approved elective options for each graduate program. Students will complete their degree requirements by following the curriculum outlined in Degree Works and will not be required to submit a separate Plan of Study to the Graduate School. A Plan of Study Revision form may be necessary if a student's M.S. thesis committee, Ph.D. dissertation committee, or the Graduate Committee agree additional coursework is needed based on the student's research project.

Master's Students

Master's students are required to submit a Plan of Study only if they wish to apply coursework that is not included among the approved elective options identified by the Graduate Committee. The Plan of Study should be developed in consultation with the student's faculty mentor or the Graduate Program Director. If required, it must be submitted no later than completion of 50% of the program requirements.

The proposed coursework will be reviewed by the Graduate Committee to determine whether it is appropriate for the student's program of study. Upon approval, the Director of Graduate Studies will submit the appropriate Degree Works exception so the approved coursework can be applied toward the student's degree requirements.

Ph.D. Students

Ph.D. students are required to develop a Plan of Study based on the curriculum outlined in Degree Works, including their selection of elective coursework. The Plan of Study is intended to help students thoughtfully plan the coursework and specialized training needed to support their research and professional development. Students should develop the Plan of Study in consultation with their advisor and present it to their Dissertation Committee for review.

The Plan of Study should be developed by the end of the student's first semester whenever possible and must be submitted to the advisor and Dissertation Committee for review no later than completion of 18 semester hours. If a Dissertation Committee has not yet been established when the initial Plan of Study is developed, the Plan should be reviewed by the committee once it is established and amended as appropriate.

A Plan of Study should include:

- The specific coursework and training activities that will satisfy degree requirements.
- The student's proposed elective coursework.
- Any additional coursework or specialized training recommended by the student's advisor or committee.
- A projected timeline for completing the proposed coursework and training.

The student's advisor and Dissertation Committee are responsible for reviewing the Plan of Study and determining whether the proposed coursework and training are appropriate for the student's research area and academic goals. The committee may recommend changes or additional coursework to ensure the student develops the expertise necessary for their dissertation research. The committee-approved Plan of Study will be maintained by the Graduate Program Director.

If the approved Plan of Study includes coursework that differs from the standard curriculum or approved elective options reflected in Degree Works, the student must complete the appropriate Plan of Study Revision process through the Graduate School. The Graduate Program Director will review and approve the requested changes following submission by the student. Any necessary Degree Works exceptions or overrides will then be completed so that the approved coursework is accurately reflected in the student's degree audit.

C. Core Curriculum

The Graduate Program in Nutrition includes a core curriculum that provides students with a strong foundation in nutrient metabolism, nutrition science, research methodology, statistics, and scientific communication. The curriculum is designed to prepare graduates for careers in research, clinical practice, public health, industry, education, and other areas of nutrition.

Specific course requirements vary by degree program (M.S. Thesis, M.S. Non-Thesis, M.S. Dietetic Internship, and Ph.D.) and are maintained in the official UNCG Academic Catalog. Students should work closely with their advisor to develop an appropriate schedule for completing required coursework and are responsible for monitoring their progress through Degree Works.

Nutrition Core Courses

The graduate core curriculum includes advanced coursework in nutrient metabolism, nutrition research methods, statistics, and seminar. These courses are intended to develop scientific knowledge, critical evaluation of the research literature, research design and methodology, quantitative reasoning, and written and oral scientific communication.

In paired course listings, the 600-level course number designates the master's-level course, while the corresponding 700-level course number designates the doctoral-level course. Students should enroll in the course level associated with their degree program unless otherwise approved by their advisor and the Graduate Program Director.

Nutrition Core Sequence (NTR 625/725, 626/726, 627/727, 628/728): The four-course nutrition core sequence provides an advanced foundation in nutrient metabolism and function, emphasizing the integration of nutrition with physiology, biochemistry, molecular biology, and diet–disease relationships. Each course is offered in a half-semester format. Students typically complete two courses during the fall semester and two during the spring semester, allowing the full sequence to be completed within one academic year. The order or timing of the sequence may be adjusted with approval from the student's advisor and the Graduate Program Director. Additionally, NTR 676/776 is required for all M.S. Dietetic Internship students.

Nutrition Research Methodology (NTR 673/773): This course introduces the principles of scientific inquiry, research design, responsible conduct of research, ethical use of human and animal subjects, and critical evaluation of nutrition research.

Nutrition Seminar (NTR 609/709): The seminar series exposes students to current topics in nutrition through presentations by faculty, graduate students, and invited speakers. The course is designed to strengthen students' abilities to critically evaluate scientific research while developing professional written and oral communication skills. Seminar presentation requirements vary by degree program and are described in the course syllabus and the Academic Catalog.

D. Grading Policy

Graduate courses may be graded using letter grades or, when designated, Satisfactory-Unsatisfactory (S/U). The graduate letter-grade scale is A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, and F/WF. Students are expected to earn grades of B or higher, or S, in coursework completed for graduate credit.

Students must maintain a cumulative graduate GPA of at least **3.0** to remain in academic good standing and to complete a graduate degree. A cumulative GPA below 3.0 results in academic probation under Graduate School policy.

Students are subject to academic dismissal based on grades earned in coursework at the 500 level or above if they:

- earn **three grades of B-, C+, C, F, or U, in any combination;** or
- earn **two grades of F or U.**

Grades earned in undergraduate-level coursework below the 500 level, including courses completed to satisfy DPD requirements, are not included in this calculation. Other Graduate School conditions for academic dismissal also apply.

Students enrolled in NTR 699 Thesis or NTR 799 Dissertation receive a grade of Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory for each semester of enrollment.

An Incomplete grade may be assigned when a student cannot complete course requirements within the semester. The instructor determines the remaining work and applicable deadlines. An Incomplete must be removed within six months of the final examination date for the term or it will automatically convert to an F.

Students should consult the current UNCG Academic Catalog for complete policies regarding grading, probation, dismissal, withdrawal, and incomplete grades.

E. Policy for General Nutrition Competency

Graduate students are expected to enter the Graduate Program in Nutrition with a foundational knowledge of human nutrition equivalent to that obtained in an introductory undergraduate nutrition course. Demonstration of this competency is required for continued enrollment in the program.

Students may satisfy this requirement in one of two ways:

- Successfully completing an introductory human nutrition course (or equivalent, 3 semester credit hours) prior to enrollment in the graduate program; or
- Demonstrating competency by successfully completing the examinations and assignments associated with **NTR 213: Introductory Nutrition** with a grade of **B or higher**.

Students who have not previously completed an introductory nutrition course must satisfy this requirement by the end of their first semester of enrollment. Students who do not demonstrate competency on their initial attempt will be provided one additional opportunity to do so. Failure to satisfy the General Nutrition Competency requirement after two attempts will result in dismissal from the Graduate Program in Nutrition. The Graduate Program Director is responsible for monitoring student progress toward completion of this requirement.

Additional Requirement for Graduate Assistants

Graduate students serving as Graduate Assistants in NTR 213 who have not previously completed an introductory nutrition course must attend all course lectures and complete all required NTR 213 examinations and assignments. To ensure adequate preparation for supporting undergraduate students, these examinations and assignments must be completed at least two weeks prior to the corresponding undergraduate examination or assignment due date.

F. Waiving Course Requirements:

Students may request a waiver of a required course when prior academic, professional, clinical, or technical experience substantially duplicates the course content. A waiver does not reduce the total credit hours required for the degree; approved replacement coursework or research credits must be completed.

Requests must be approved by the student's advisor and advisory committee and submitted in writing to the Graduate Program Director with supporting justification. Approved waivers will be processed through the appropriate departmental and Graduate School procedures.

G. Transferring Courses Toward Graduate Degree Requirements

Graduate coursework completed at another accredited institution may be considered for transfer when it is relevant to the student's degree requirements. Transfer credit must be approved by the student's advisor or advisory committee, the Graduate Program Director, and the Graduate School.

For master's students, transferred coursework may not have been used toward a previously awarded degree. For Ph.D. students, graduate coursework completed as part of a prior master's degree may be considered when it substantially overlaps with a doctoral requirement, such as statistics or research methods, and is approved for inclusion in the doctoral Plan of Study by their advisory committee.

Students requesting transfer credit must provide appropriate documentation, which may include course syllabi, reading lists, and other materials needed to evaluate course content. Approval is not automatic, and all coursework must meet current Graduate School requirements, including minimum-grade and time-limit policies.

Transfer credit may not exceed one-third of the applicable non-thesis, non-capstone, or non-dissertation course hours required by the degree program. Approved transfer credit will be applied through the appropriate departmental and Graduate School process and will be approved by the student's primary advisor in consultation with the Graduate Program Director and the Graduate Committee.

H. Continuous Enrollment Policy

Graduate students are expected to maintain continuous enrollment from admission through completion of all degree requirements in accordance with Graduate School policy. Students should consult the current UNCG Academic Catalog for complete information regarding continuous enrollment, leaves of absence, withdrawal, and readmission.

Students who have completed all required coursework but have not yet completed their degree requirements must remain continuously enrolled until graduation. This includes students completing a thesis, dissertation, or the M.S. non-thesis comprehensive examination.

Students should register for the following continuation courses, as appropriate:

- NTR 801 – M.S. Thesis Continuation
- NTR 802 – Ph.D. Dissertation Continuation
- NTR 803 – M.S. Non-Thesis Continuation

These variable-credit courses maintain continuous enrollment while students complete their remaining degree requirements. The number of credit hours is determined by the student's advisor or faculty supervisor based on the student's academic progress.

Thesis and dissertation students must be enrolled in NTR 699/799 or NTR 801/802, as appropriate, during the semester in which the thesis or dissertation is defended and the degree is awarded, including the summer term.

I. Leave of Absence

Graduate students who need to interrupt continuous enrollment may request a leave of absence for up to one academic year. The request should be developed in consultation with the student's advisor, approved by the advisor and Graduate Program Director, and submitted to the Graduate School. Whenever possible, students should apply before the anticipated leave begins.

While on leave, students may not use University resources or require faculty supervision or communication. The first approved leave generally extends the degree time limit by one year. A leave extending beyond one academic year closes the student's matriculation and requires reapplication to the Graduate School. Students should consult the current Academic Catalog for complete requirements and information regarding funding, assistantships, financial aid, and international student status.

J. Establishing In-state Residency for Tuition Purposes

Residency classifications for tuition purposes are determined by the North Carolina Residency Determination Service (RDS), not by the Department of Nutrition or UNC Greensboro. New students claiming North Carolina residency, students seeking reclassification from out-of-state status, and certain continuing or returning students must complete the RDS process.

In general, students seeking in-state classification must demonstrate that they have established and maintained legal residence in North Carolina for at least 12 consecutive months before the beginning of the applicable term and that they intend to make North Carolina their permanent home rather than residing in the state primarily to attend college. Meeting these general requirements does not guarantee classification as an in-state resident.

Students are responsible for completing the RDS process promptly and ensuring that their determination is finalized by the applicable University deadline. Questions regarding residency determinations, reconsiderations, or appeals must be directed to RDS. Current requirements, deadlines, and links to the RDS application are available through the Spartan Central NC Residency for Tuition Purposes [webpage](#).

Out-of-state students who are not classified as international students and who receive an assistantship stipend, tuition waiver, or other tuition assistance are expected to seek reevaluation of their residency classification after their first year of receiving support. Students must complete the applicable RDS process and provide any requested documentation.

K. Changing Committee Members or Advisors (*M.S. Thesis and Ph.D. Students*)

A student who is considering a change in advisor should first consult with the Graduate Program Director. The Graduate Program Director will help the student evaluate the situation, understand the academic and research implications of the proposed change, and coordinate communication with the current and prospective advisors as appropriate. Any change is subject to the availability and agreement of a qualified faculty member who is willing to serve as the student's advisor.

Changes to an approved M.S. thesis or doctoral advisory committee must be submitted through the appropriate University process and approved by the Graduate Program Director. Committee changes may be necessary because of changes in faculty availability, the direction of the student's research, or other circumstances affecting the committee's ability to serve.

Whenever possible, students should make committee changes before the thesis or dissertation proposal is approved. Changes made after proposal approval may require the new committee member to review the approved project and could result in revisions to the research plan or timeline.

L. Professional Conduct, Performance, and Remediation

Nutrition graduate students are expected to demonstrate the academic competence, professional conduct, ethical behavior, and interpersonal skills necessary to complete their degree requirements and participate appropriately in instructional, research, clinical, community, and supervised-practice settings. Students must comply with University policies, applicable professional and ethical standards, program requirements, and the reasonable expectations of faculty supervisors and placement sites.

Students engaged in research must also comply with the research-data stewardship, access, security, integrity, and permitted-use requirements described in **Appendix C**, including restrictions on unauthorized sharing or submission of nonpublic research materials to non-study personnel or generative artificial intelligence systems.

Faculty have a responsibility to support students' academic and professional development, provide appropriate supervision and feedback, maintain the standards of the program and profession, and address conduct or performance that may affect academic progress, professional responsibilities, or the safety and well-being of others. When concerns arise, the Department will ordinarily seek to identify them early, communicate them clearly, and provide an opportunity for improvement when appropriate.

a. Professional Conduct and Performance Concerns

A professional conduct or performance concern exists when a student's documented behavior or performance substantially interferes with the student's academic progress, assigned responsibilities, professional development, or ability to participate safely and effectively in program activities.

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

1. violation of University policies, professional standards, ethical codes, research requirements, or safety procedures;

2. repeated inability or unwillingness to demonstrate required academic, research, instructional, clinical, or supervised-practice competencies;
3. significant or repeated problems with attendance, punctuality, communication, documentation, reliability, or completion of assigned responsibilities;
4. failure to follow reasonable supervisory instructions or comply with established program or placement-site requirements;
5. inappropriate, unprofessional, or disruptive conduct toward students, faculty, staff, research participants, patients, clients, or community partners;
6. failure to respond adequately to supervision, feedback, or a previously established improvement plan; or
7. conduct that creates a substantial concern regarding safety, ethical practice, professional judgment, or the student's ability to satisfy the essential requirements of the program.

Evaluations will be based on observable and documented conduct or performance rather than assumptions about a student's health, disability, identity, or personal circumstances. Students who believe that a disability or health condition affects their access to the program should contact the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services or another appropriate University office. Approved accommodations do not eliminate essential academic, professional, ethical, or safety requirements.

For students in the M.S. Dietetic Internship program, professional conduct, performance, or impairment concerns that arise during supervised practice or in clinical settings are governed by the applicable policies and procedures outlined in the M.S./DI Student Handbook.

b. Possible Responses and Remediation

The appropriate response will depend on the nature, severity, frequency, and history of the concern. Actions are not necessarily hierarchical, and not every action will be appropriate in every case.

Possible responses may include:

1. verbal or written feedback or warning;
2. a formal reprimand;
3. an unsatisfactory grade when warranted by the student's performance in a course or other graded experience;
4. repetition of a course, practicum, rotation, or other academic experience when permitted;
5. required additional coursework, training, or professional-development activities;
6. increased or additional supervision;
7. modification or removal of instructional, research, clinical, or supervised-practice responsibilities;
8. a written remediation or performance-improvement plan;
9. formal probation;
10. a recommendation that the student consider another academic or professional pathway; or
11. a recommendation for dismissal from the program in accordance with applicable University and Graduate School policies.

When remediation is appropriate, the written plan should ordinarily identify:

- the specific conduct or performance requiring improvement;
- the standards the student is expected to meet;
- the actions required of the student;
- any support, training, or additional supervision to be provided;
- the period allowed for improvement;
- the method and schedule for evaluating progress; and
- the possible consequences if sufficient improvement is not demonstrated.

Serious conduct, ethical, safety, or performance concerns may require immediate action and may not permit an extended remediation period.

c. Review and Due Process

1. Students will be informed of the Department's professional conduct, performance, and remediation expectations through the Graduate Student Handbook or other appropriate program materials.
2. Concerns should be reported to the Graduate Program Director or the appropriate program director. Reports should identify the specific conduct or performance at issue and include relevant supporting information when available.
3. The student will ordinarily receive written notice of significant concerns and an opportunity to respond. Depending on the circumstances, the concerns may also be discussed with the student during a meeting with the Graduate Program Director, advisor, faculty supervisor, program director, or other appropriate individuals.
4. When appropriate, the student may be provided with a written remediation or improvement plan describing the concerns, required corrective actions, timeline, evaluation process, and potential consequences.
5. The student's progress will be reviewed within the period identified in the plan. The student will receive written notice of whether the requirements have been satisfied, additional remediation is required, or further action is recommended.
6. Cases that may result in departmental probation, removal from a required program activity, or a recommendation for dismissal will be reviewed by the Graduate Program Director and Graduate Committee. The student will be given an opportunity to provide relevant information before a decision or recommendation is made.
7. The student will receive written notice of the resulting decision or recommendation, the basis for it, any remaining opportunities for remediation, and any applicable review or appeal process.
8. Recommendations affecting a student's continued enrollment will be handled in accordance with applicable Department, Graduate School, and University policies. Alleged violations of the Student Code of Conduct, academic integrity requirements, research compliance requirements, or other University policies may be referred to the appropriate University office.
9. Documentation related to significant conduct or performance concerns, remediation plans, and resulting decisions may be maintained in the student's departmental record in accordance with University recordkeeping and privacy requirements.

M. Responsibilities of Graduate Instructional and Research Assistants

The Department of Nutrition employs graduate students primarily as Graduate Instructional Assistants (GIAs) and Graduate Research Assistants (GRAs). Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) may also be appointed when appropriate. Students holding any graduate assistantship are expected to fulfill the responsibilities described in their appointment documentation and to maintain professional, reliable, and ethical conduct throughout the appointment.

Assistantship responsibilities may include instructional support, research activities, administrative tasks, or other duties associated with the student's assigned position. Students should communicate promptly with their faculty supervisor regarding questions, scheduling conflicts, or concerns about their assigned responsibilities. Concerns involving duties outside the scope of the appointment, work expectations that exceed the assigned number of hours, or other unresolved assistantship issues should be reported to the Graduate Program Director.

Assistantship performance will be evaluated by the faculty supervisor at the end of each semester. All evaluations will be reviewed by the Graduate Program Director and Graduate Committee. Students whose performance does not meet expectations will be informed of the specific concerns and may be asked to participate in a meeting or written improvement plan. Documentation of significant performance concerns and any resulting plan will be maintained in the student's departmental record, and may lead to ineligibility for future assistantship assignments.

GIAs, GRAs, and GTAs must follow the official assistantship work calendar established for each academic year, including required start and end dates, work periods, and University holidays. Students should consult the current Graduate School assistantship calendar rather than relying on the University academic calendar or class meeting dates. Any requested exception to the established work calendar must be approved in advance by the student's faculty supervisor and Graduate Program Director.

Students appointed as GIAs, GRAs, or GTAs must also complete any training or orientation required by the Graduate School, the University, the Department, or the specific assignment before beginning their duties.

N. Policy on Length of Departmental Stipend Support:

Departmental assistantship stipends and tuition support are awarded for one academic year at a time. An award in one year does not guarantee support in a subsequent year. Stipends and tuition support are awarded separately; therefore, a student may receive one form of support without receiving the other. Continuing support is reviewed each spring for the following academic year.

Decisions are based on:

- performance in the student's GIA or GRA assignment;
- satisfactory progress toward completion of the degree;
- availability of stipend and tuition-support funds;
- departmental instructional and administrative needs; and
- the needs and available resources of individual research programs.

The following limits generally apply to support from departmental sources:

- a. M.S. students may receive no more than two academic years of stipend and tuition support.
- b. Ph.D. students entering the program with an M.S. degree may receive no more than three academic years of stipend and tuition support.
- c. Ph.D. students entering the program without an M.S. degree may receive no more than four years of stipend and tuition support, including summer support.

Exceptions may be considered by the Graduate Committee when extenuating circumstances affect a student's progress. The student's advisor must submit a written request describing the circumstances, the student's progress toward the degree, and the anticipated timeline for completion. Approval of an exception is not guaranteed and remains dependent on the availability of departmental or research-program funds.

O. Outside Employment While Receiving an Assistantship

Students receiving a full-time assistantship stipend through the Department of Nutrition or another funding source may not hold additional employment during the period of the assistantship.

A full-time assistantship, together with the academic demands of graduate study, constitutes the student's full professional workload. Students are therefore expected to devote the necessary time and attention to their academic program and assigned assistantship responsibilities.

Students must disclose any existing or proposed employment immediately to the Graduate Program Director. A student who accepts or continues outside employment while receiving a full-time assistantship will be subject to termination of the assistantship stipend and any associated tuition support.

P. Policy About Final Research Presentation for M.S. and Ph.D.

All M.S. thesis and Ph.D. students must give a publicly announced presentation of their research within two weeks of the final thesis or dissertation defense.

M.S. thesis students are expected to give their final research presentation through NTR 609. This presentation may satisfy the NTR 609 presentation requirement when approved by the course instructor and if the student's committee members can be present.

Ph.D. students must give their final research presentation during the scheduled NTR 609/709 seminar period when the defense occurs during the academic year. Ph.D. students are not required to enroll in NTR 709 for this presentation because, after completion of the dissertation proposal, they may enroll only in dissertation research or extension hours. If the defense occurs during the summer, the presentation may be scheduled separately from the seminar period.

Q. Use of Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence tools, including generative AI and large language models, may be used only in ways consistent with University policy, course requirements, research standards, and the expectations established by the student's instructor, advisor, or research supervisor.

Students are responsible for the accuracy, originality, integrity, and appropriate attribution of all work they submit. Use of an AI system does not transfer responsibility for errors, fabricated information, unsupported citations, plagiarism, misrepresentation, or violations of academic or research integrity.

Unless expressly authorized, students may not use AI tools to complete examinations, graded assignments, research analyses, manuscripts, theses, dissertations, capstone projects, or other academic work. Instructors, advisors, and committees may prohibit, limit, or require disclosure of AI use for specific courses, assignments, or research activities.

When AI use is permitted by the student's primary advisor or GIA faculty advisor in accordance with the Office of Research standards on intellectual property rights, students must disclose and document that use to their advisor(s). This may include identifying the tool used, describing how it was used, and retaining relevant prompts or outputs. AI-generated text, analyses, images, code, references, or other materials may not be presented as the student's independent work when disclosure or attribution is required.

Students may not upload, enter, transmit, or otherwise provide confidential, proprietary, identifiable, unpublished, or nonpublic information or data to an AI system without prior authorization from their advisor. This prohibition includes raw research data, participant information, laboratory records, unpublished findings, course materials, examination content, student records, clinical information, and materials belonging to faculty members, collaborators, research groups, or external partners. De-identification alone does not authorize such use. Violations may result in disciplinary action under applicable departmental, Graduate School, University, academic-integrity, research-integrity, employment, or professional-conduct procedures.

R. Graduate Student Orientation

All graduate students are required to attend the Department of Nutrition graduate student orientation at the beginning of each academic year. Attendance is mandatory and must occur in person. This requirement supports program and accreditation expectations and ensures that students receive current information regarding academic responsibilities, assistantship duties, professional expectations, safety requirements, and departmental procedures. Orientation will be held the week before classes begin with the exact date communicated to students by the Nutrition Department Office.

V. Master of Science Non-thesis (M.S. Non-thesis) Program

A. M.S. Non-Thesis Advising

The Graduate Program Director serves as the advisor for M.S. non-thesis students, and the Graduate Advisory Committee provides additional guidance and oversight. Students are responsible for monitoring their progress in Degree Works, completing all degree requirements, and submitting required forms and graduation materials by the applicable deadlines.

The M.S. non-thesis option requires a minimum of **40** credit hours and is designed to prepare students for practitioner, consulting, administrative, and other professional positions in nutrition. The program may also include coursework needed to complete Didactic Program in Dietetics requirements.

Students must complete the required capstone experience in NTR 673, Nutrition Research Methodology. At least 26 credit hours of the degree must be completed in courses at the 600 level.

B. M.S. Non-thesis Course Work:

a. Required Core (14 hours minimum)

- NTR 609A – Seminar in Nutrition (1)
- NTR 609B – Seminar in Nutrition (2)
- NTR 625 – Gene Expression and Protein Metabolism (2)
- NTR 626 – Carbohydrates and Lipids (2)
- NTR 627 – Antioxidants and Bioactive Food Components (2)
- NTR 628 – Vitamins and Minerals (2)

Students must also complete one of the following statistics courses:

- ERM 680 – Intermediate Statistical Methods in Education (3)
- HEA 604 – Quantitative Methods (3)
- STA 661 – Advanced Statistics in the Behavioral and Biological Sciences I (3)
- HHS 625 – Research Methods in the Health and Human Sciences (3)

b. Research Techniques (3 hours minimum)

Students must complete at least 3 credit hours from one or more of the following research courses:

- NTR 601 – Directed Individual Study in Nutrition (1–6)
- NTR 623 – Current Trends in Nutrition (3)
- NTR 653 – Problems in Food and Nutrition (2–4)
- NTR 670 – Research Skill Development (2–6)

c. Capstone Experience (3 credit hours)

NTR 673 serves as the required capstone experience for the M.S. non-thesis program.

- NTR 673 – Nutrition Research Methodology (3)

d. Electives (20 hours minimum)

Students must complete at least 20 credit hours of additional 500- or 600-level NTR courses or other graduate-level courses approved by the Graduate Advisory Committee.

Students admitted to the UNCG Dietetic Internship may apply up to 18 credit hours of approved Dietetic Internship coursework toward the elective requirement. Students should consult the current University Catalog and the Dietetic Internship section of this handbook for applicable course requirements.

C. Early-Decision Application to the Dietetic Internship

M.S. non-thesis students who intend to transition into the Dietetic Internship after completing the required academic preparation may be eligible to apply through the Dietetic Internship's early-decision application process. This is the intended application pathway for eligible M.S. non-thesis students seeking to continue into the Dietetic Internship.

Applicants must satisfy all current Dietetic Internship eligibility and application requirements, including completion or anticipated completion of an ACEND-accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics and submission of the required verification statement or declaration of intent.

Students interested in this pathway should consult with the Didactic Program in Dietetics Director and Dietetic Internship Director early in their M.S. program to ensure that all DPD requirements can be completed within the appropriate timeline and to confirm their eligibility, application requirements, and deadlines.

Participation in the early-decision process does not guarantee admission, and the number of available positions may vary from year to year.

Students must complete the current application and interview process established by the Dietetic Internship. Applicants who accept an early-decision offer must complete all required acceptance documentation and comply with any applicable ACEND, DICAS, or program requirements.

Current eligibility criteria, application materials, deadlines, and acceptance procedures are provided in the Dietetic Internship program materials.

D. Applying for Graduation

Students must apply for graduation through the University's designated online process by the deadline established for the semester or summer term in which they expect to complete the degree.

Students are responsible for reviewing the current graduation requirements, deadlines, fees, and application instructions provided by the Graduate School and the University Registrar. Students who do not complete all degree requirements during the term for which they applied may be required to submit a new application and pay an additional fee.

E. Completing Didactic Program in Dietetics Requirements During Graduate Study

Students enrolled in the M.S. or Ph.D. program may be able to complete Didactic Program in Dietetics requirements concurrently with their graduate degree. Applicable DPD coursework may be

incorporated into the student's academic plan when permitted by degree requirements and University policy.

Students interested in this option should meet with the Didactic Program in Dietetics Director early in their graduate program to review prior coursework, identify remaining DPD requirements, and determine how those courses may fit within the graduate curriculum and Degree Works.

Completion of DPD coursework does not guarantee admission to the Dietetic Internship. Students must separately satisfy all current Dietetic Internship eligibility and application requirements.

VI. Master of Science Thesis (M.S. Thesis) Program

A. M.S. Thesis Advisor

M.S. thesis students select an advisor based on shared research interests and the availability of an appropriate research project. This selection is often made before the student begins the program. Students who have not identified an advisor and a viable thesis project by the end of the first semester should consult with the Graduate Program Director to determine whether continuation in the thesis option is appropriate. The thesis advisor serves as chair of the thesis committee and guides the student in developing and completing the thesis research.

In limited circumstances, a faculty member from a UNC Greensboro department other than the Department of Nutrition may provide primary guidance on the research project. In such cases, a qualified Nutrition faculty member must serve as chair of the thesis committee.

B. Thesis Committee

The thesis committee evaluates the student's thesis proposal and final thesis in both written and oral formats. The committee must include at least three faculty members. At least two members, including the thesis advisor who serves as chair, must be faculty members in the Department of Nutrition. Faculty members from other departments or institutions who hold an official adjunct appointment in Nutrition are considered Nutrition faculty for this purpose.

The thesis committee must be formed during the student's first year in the program. The student must complete the departmental Thesis Committee Appointment form, obtain the required signatures, and submit the completed form to the Graduate Program Director. The form is available on the Department of Nutrition student forms webpage and will be retained in the student's departmental record.

C. M.S. Thesis Course Work

The M.S. thesis option requires a minimum of **37** credit hours of coursework and thesis research. At least 26 credit hours must be completed in courses at the 600 level.

a. Required Core (15 hours minimum)

- NTR 609A – Seminar in Nutrition (2 credits total at 1 credit per semester)
- NTR 609B – Seminar in Nutrition (2)
- NTR 625 – Gene Expression and Protein Metabolism (2)
- NTR 626 – Carbohydrates and Lipids (2)
- NTR 627 – Antioxidants and Bioactive Food Components (2)
- NTR 628 – Vitamins and Minerals (2)

Students must also complete one of the following statistics courses:

- ERM 680 – Intermediate Statistical Methods in Education (3)
- HEA 604 – Quantitative Methods (3)
- STA 661 – Advanced Statistics in the Behavioral and Biological Sciences I (3)
- HHS 625 – Research Methods in the Health and Human Sciences (3)

b. Research Techniques (9 hours minimum)

- NTR 673 – Nutrition Research Methodology (3)

Students must also complete at least 6 credit hours from one or more of the following courses:

- NTR 601 – Directed Individual Study in Nutrition (1-6)
- NTR 623 – Current Trends in Nutrition (3)
- NTR 653 – Problem in Food and Nutrition (2-4)
- NTR 670 – Research Skill Development (2-6)

c. Electives (7 hours minimum)

With approval of the thesis advisor and committee, a student will select one 3-hour course from any other NTR courses at the 500 or 600 level and at least 4 additional hours in either NTR or other science courses at the 500 or 600 level.

d. Thesis (6 hours): Capstone Experience

- NTR 699 – Thesis (6)*

* A maximum of 6 credit hours of NTR 699 may be applied toward the degree. Students who have completed the required thesis credits but have not finished the thesis may be required to enroll in NTR 801, Thesis Extension. NTR 801 does not count toward the 37 credit hours required for the degree.

D. Master's Thesis Proposal

Once the student and advisor have developed a preliminary thesis project, the student must prepare a written proposal for review and approval by the thesis committee. The student should work closely with the advisor to develop and revise the proposal before it is distributed to the committee.

The proposal must be provided to committee members at least two weeks before the proposal meeting. During the meeting, the committee will review the rationale, design, and feasibility of the proposed research and may recommend revisions to strengthen the project.

The committee may approve the proposal as presented, approve it pending specified revisions, or require substantial revisions and an additional proposal meeting before approval.

Nutrition Proposal Format Guidelines:

The thesis proposal describes the research the student intends to conduct for the M.S. degree. It should establish a clear scientific rationale for the project, demonstrate an understanding of the relevant literature, and provide an appropriate and feasible plan for completing the research.

M.S. thesis projects are often developed within the advisor's broader research program. The student and advisor should therefore work closely throughout the development and revision of the proposal. Students are expected to complete and present the proposal during their first year in the program.

The proposal should follow an NIH-style format and may not exceed 10 single-spaced pages, including text, figures, and tables. References do not count toward the page limit and may be formatted in a style consistent with top journals in the student's area in nutrition. The proposal must use an 11-point font and include the following clearly identified sections:

- a. Introduction (1-2 pages).** The Introduction should explain the rationale and conceptual basis for the proposed research. It should clearly identify the research problem, relevant gap in knowledge, central hypothesis or research question, and one or two specific aims.
- b. Review of Literature (5-6 pages).** The Review of Literature should critically synthesize the research relevant to the proposed project. Students should interpret and integrate the literature rather than present a series of summaries of individual studies. This section should explain how the existing evidence supports the proposed hypothesis, research question, and specific aims.
- c. Study Design and Methodology (3-4 pages).** The Study Design and Methodology section should describe the studies that will be used to address the hypothesis, research question, and specific aims. It should include the study design, participants or experimental model, procedures, primary measures, and planned analyses, as applicable.

E. Master's Thesis Defense:

After completing data collection and analysis, the student must prepare the thesis in consultation with the advisor. The advisor will determine when the document is sufficiently developed for review by the full thesis committee.

The student is responsible for scheduling the defense and providing the committee with a complete draft of the thesis at least two weeks before the defense date. The thesis must follow the current

formatting and submission requirements established by the Graduate School. Students should expect that revisions may be required following the defense.

The thesis defense may proceed following the required two-week notification to the Graduate School by the student. The defense begins with a public presentation of the thesis research. The public presentation is encouraged to occur during a departmental seminar but may be held outside of the seminar schedule when extenuating circumstances exist.

Following the public presentation, the student must meet with their thesis committee in a closed session. During this session, committee members may ask additional questions regarding the research, methods, findings, scientific foundations of the project, and related nutrition knowledge. The closed session must occur within 10 days of the public presentation. After questioning is complete, the committee will deliberate privately.

The committee may reach one of three decisions:

- **Acceptance:** The thesis and defense meet departmental expectations. Minor revisions may still be required and may be reviewed and approved by the advisor.
- **Provisional Acceptance:** The thesis or defense requires substantial revision or additional work before final approval. The committee will provide the student with written expectations. The student may be required to submit a revised thesis, complete additional analyses, respond to further questions, or participate in another committee meeting. All committee members must approve the final thesis.
- **Rejection:** The thesis or defense does not meet departmental expectations because of substantial deficiencies in the conduct, analysis, interpretation, or presentation of the research. The committee will determine whether the student may undertake additional work or a new thesis project, or whether dismissal from the thesis program should be recommended in accordance with applicable departmental and University policies.

F. Filing the Thesis with the Graduate School

The thesis must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the current formatting, approval, and electronic submission requirements established by the Graduate School. Students must use the official UNCG thesis template and submit the thesis as a PDF through the University's designated electronic thesis and dissertation submission system.

Students must submit an approval copy by the deadline published in the Academic Calendar. The Graduate School will review the document for compliance with formatting requirements and notify the student of any required revisions. After completing all revisions and receiving final approval from the thesis committee, the student must submit the final corrected copy and all required forms by the applicable deadline.

Required documentation includes the Final Committee Approval of Thesis/Dissertation form and the ETD Release and Hold Harmless Agreement. Students are responsible for reviewing all current

instructions, deadlines, publishing options, fees, and embargo requirements on the Graduate School Thesis and Dissertation webpage.

Students should allow sufficient time for Graduate School review and any required revisions. The thesis is not considered complete until the student receives confirmation from the Graduate School that the document and all required paperwork have been accepted.

G. Applying for Graduation

Students must apply for graduation through the Graduate School's electronic student forms by the deadline established for the semester or summer term in which they expect to complete the degree.

Students are responsible for reviewing the current application requirements, deadlines, fees, and instructions provided by the Graduate School and the University Registrar. Students who do not complete all degree requirements during the term for which they applied may be required to submit a new application and pay an additional fee.

H. M.S. Thesis Progress Benchmarks

M.S. thesis students are expected to make steady progress toward completion of the degree. The following benchmarks provide general guidance:

- **Before beginning the program or during the first semester:** Identify a thesis advisor and a viable research project.
- **During the first year:** Form the thesis committee and submit the departmental Thesis Committee Appointment form.
- **During the first year:** Develop, present, and obtain committee approval of the thesis proposal.
- **Throughout the program:** Complete required coursework and thesis research while maintaining regular communication with the advisor and committee.
- **Before the thesis defense: Prepare the thesis in consultation with the advisor, schedule the defense, and provide the committee with a complete draft at least two weeks before the defense.**
- **At the completion of the thesis:** Present and defend the research and submit the required thesis defense documentation to the Graduate School.
- **During the intended graduation term:** Apply for graduation and submit the approval and final copies of the thesis, along with all required forms, by the deadlines established by the Graduate School.

These benchmarks are intended as general expectations. The timing of individual research projects may vary, but students should consult promptly with their advisor and the Graduate Program Director if substantial delays occur.

VII. Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Program

The Ph.D. program prepares students to conduct original research in one of three areas of specialization: Community Nutrition and Nutrition Education, Human and Clinical Nutrition, or Cellular and Molecular Nutrition.

Although research is the central focus of the degree, Ph.D. training also develops broadly applicable skills in critical and integrative thinking, organization, analytical problem-solving, scientific writing, and oral communication. These skills prepare graduates for careers in research, higher education, government, industry, healthcare, and other professional settings.

A. Selecting a Ph.D. Dissertation Advisor

Ph.D. students select a dissertation advisor based on shared research interests and the availability of an appropriate research project. This selection is typically made before the student begins the program. Students who have not identified an advisor and a viable dissertation project by the end of the first semester should consult with the Graduate Program Director to determine whether continuation in the Ph.D. program is appropriate.

In limited circumstances, a student may request approval to work with a primary research advisor outside the Department of Nutrition. The request requires a Co-Dissertation Committee Chair from the Department of Nutrition and must be approved by the Graduate Committee. It must include a description of the proposed research project, written agreement from the proposed external advisor, and any other documentation requested by the Graduate Committee.

If the arrangement is approved, the student must form the dissertation committee during the first semester. A Department of Nutrition faculty member must also serve as the student's academic advisor and as a member of the dissertation committee. This faculty member will help the student and external research advisor navigate departmental and University requirements.

B. Selecting Your Ph.D. Dissertation Committee

Ph.D. students must form a dissertation committee as early as possible and no later than the end of the first year of study. The committee must include at least four members, including the dissertation advisor. Committee membership should be selected jointly by the student and advisor based on the expertise needed to support and evaluate the student's area of specialization and dissertation research.

At least two committee members, including the chair, must be full members of the Graduate Faculty. For a four-member committee, no more than one member may be from outside the Department of Nutrition. Faculty members from other departments or institutions who hold an official adjunct appointment in Nutrition are considered Nutrition faculty for this purpose.

After all prospective members have agreed to serve, the student must complete the Doctoral Advisory/Dissertation Committee Appointment form and obtain all required approvals and signatures before submitting it to the Graduate School.

C. Changing from the M.S. Program into the Ph.D. Program

M.S. students who wish to enter the Ph.D. program must submit a new application through the Graduate School. Admission is not automatic. The Nutrition graduate faculty will review the application and evaluate the student's preparation, research interests, academic progress, and potential for successful doctoral study.

D. Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Course Work

The Ph.D. in Nutrition requires **61-67** credit hours. At least 75% of all coursework, excluding dissertation credits, must be completed at the 600 or 700 level.

Students entering with an M.S. degree may request waivers for requirements that have been satisfied through equivalent prior coursework. These decisions are made by the student's advisor and Advisory/Dissertation Committee. Courses completed as part of a prior degree may satisfy requirements but may not be counted again toward the Ph.D. credit-hour total.

a. Required Core Courses (14 hours minimum)

- NTR 709A – Seminar in Nutrition (4 hours total)
- NTR 709B – Seminar in Nutrition (2)
- NTR 725 – Gene Expression and Protein Metabolism (2)
- NTR 726 – Energy, Carbohydrate, and Lipid Metabolism (2)
- NTR 727 – Antioxidants and Bioactive Food Components (2)
- NTR 728 – Vitamins and Minerals (2)

b. Research Techniques (21 hours minimum)

- NTR 773 – Nutrition Research Methodology (3)
- One approved statistics course (3 or 4)
- At least 8 credit hours in two or three courses selected to develop technical competency and strengthen the student's research preparation
- At least 6 credit hours from one or more of the following:
 - NTR 701 – Directed Study in Nutrition
 - NTR 723 – Current Trends in Nutrition
 - NTR 753 – Problems in Food and Nutrition
 - NTR 770 – Research Skill Development

Course selections must be approved by the Advisory/Dissertation Committee. One additional statistics course is typically recommended by the student's Advisory/Dissertation Committee.

c. Electives (8 hours minimum)

With approval of the Advisory/Dissertation Committee, students must complete:

- 6 credit hours from other NTR courses at the 500-700 level; and
- at least 2 additional credit hours in NTR or a supporting program at the 500-700 level.

d. Research and Dissertation (18-24 hours)

- NTR 790 – Doctoral Research (6)
- NTR 799 – Dissertation Problem (12–18)

A minimum of 12 credit hours of NTR 799 is required. Students may begin enrolling in NTR 799 only after successfully completing the dissertation proposal process. Once enrollment in NTR 799 begins, students may enroll only in NTR 799 or the appropriate dissertation extension course until completion of the degree.

e. Comprehensive Examination

The comprehensive examination includes written and oral components. The written exam consists of the proposal document, followed by the oral defense. Together, the written and oral components constitute the comprehensive exam. The student must consult with the Advisory/Dissertation Committee regarding the content, format, timing, and evaluation of each component.

E. Completing Didactic Program in Dietetics Requirements During Graduate Study

Students enrolled in the M.S. or Ph.D. program may be able to complete Didactic Program in Dietetics requirements concurrently with their graduate degree. Applicable DPD coursework may be incorporated into the student's academic plan when permitted by degree requirements and University policy.

Students interested in this option should meet with the Didactic Program in Dietetics Director early in their graduate program to review prior coursework, identify remaining DPD requirements, and determine how those courses may fit within the graduate curriculum and Degree Works.

Completion of DPD coursework does not guarantee admission to the Dietetic Internship. Students must separately satisfy all current Dietetic Internship eligibility and application requirements.

F. Gaining Graduate Teaching Experience

Ph.D. students interested in college or university teaching are strongly encouraged to complete NTR 745, Teaching Practicum in Nutrition. The course provides a supervised teaching experience under the guidance of a Nutrition faculty member.

The student and supervising faculty member will establish the student's responsibilities based on the course, the student's prior experience, and the instructional needs of the semester. Responsibilities may include observing instruction, assisting with course planning, developing instructional materials, delivering lectures or other class activities, and receiving feedback on teaching performance.

Teaching responsibilities should increase as appropriate during the semester while remaining under the supervision of the faculty instructor. Specific expectations and methods of evaluation must be established at the beginning of the practicum.

G. Admission to Ph.D. Candidacy and the Dissertation Proposal

Before beginning dissertation research, the student must prepare a written proposal describing the rationale, goals, specific aims, and planned approach for the dissertation project. The proposal must demonstrate the student's ability to synthesize relevant literature, develop a clear and testable research question or hypothesis, and design an appropriate and feasible research plan.

The student must successfully defend the proposal before the Dissertation Committee. The committee may approve the proposal, require revisions, or require an additional proposal meeting before approval.

Students entering the Ph.D. program with an M.S. thesis degree are generally expected to complete the proposal defense within the first three semesters of study. Students entering with a bachelor's degree are generally expected to complete the proposal defense within the first five semesters.

Successful completion of the dissertation proposal process is required before the student may enroll in NTR 799 and proceed to formal dissertation research.

a. Dissertation Proposal: Written and Oral Comprehensive Exams

The student will develop a written dissertation proposal in consultation with the advisor and Dissertation Committee. The proposal should present a focused, hypothesis-driven research plan that establishes the scientific rationale, significance, feasibility, specific aims, and approach of the proposed dissertation research. It should be grounded in the relevant primary literature and any available preliminary or historical data.

The dissertation proposal should demonstrate that the student has identified the technical knowledge and research skills necessary to complete the project. When additional preparation is needed, the proposal should explain how the student will acquire the required skills.

The written dissertation proposal and its oral defense together serve as the comprehensive examination for the Ph.D. program. The purpose of the comprehensive examination is to evaluate whether the student can:

- synthesize relevant scientific literature and concepts;
- develop a logical and testable hypothesis or research question;
- design an appropriate and feasible research plan;
- communicate the proposed research clearly in writing;
- independently explain and defend the proposed research; and

- demonstrate sufficient preparation to proceed to doctoral candidacy and dissertation research.

b. Scheduling and Conduct of the Proposal Defense

The student is responsible for scheduling the proposal defense and must provide the completed written proposal to the Dissertation Committee at least two weeks before the scheduled defense.

During the defense, the student must explain and defend the rationale, hypothesis or research questions, specific aims, study design, methodology, feasibility, anticipated outcomes, and scientific foundations of the proposed research. The committee may ask questions about the proposal and related subject areas necessary to evaluate the student's preparation for doctoral research.

During development of the proposal, the advisor is expected to guide the student's research planning, discuss the scientific rationale and methodology, and review drafts of the document. During the proposal defense, however, the student must independently explain and defend the work.

When the advisor serves as chair of the Dissertation Committee, the advisor will facilitate the meeting but will not answer questions for the student, clarify the student's responses, or otherwise direct the examination. The advisor will participate fully in the committee's evaluation after questioning is complete.

c. Evaluation

The committee will evaluate the written proposal and oral defense as an integrated comprehensive examination. The evaluation will consider:

- the clarity, organization, logic, and completeness of the written proposal;
- the student's understanding of the proposed research and its scientific foundations;
- the student's ability to explain and defend the research plan;
- the significance and feasibility of the proposed project; and
- the student's preparation and independence in proceeding with doctoral research.

The committee may reach one of three outcomes:

- **Acceptable.** The written proposal and oral defense meet departmental expectations. The student passes the comprehensive examination, is admitted to Ph.D. candidacy, and may proceed with dissertation research and enrollment in NTR 799. The approved proposal serves as the general plan for the dissertation. Substantial changes to the approved research plan must be discussed with and approved by the Dissertation Committee.

- **Acceptable with Improvement Required.** The proposed research is generally appropriate, but revisions or additional preparation are required before the comprehensive examination is considered complete. The committee will provide written requirements and a timeline for completion. Requirements may include revising the written proposal, completing additional coursework or training, responding to additional questions, or participating in another committee meeting. Failure to satisfy the requirements within the established timeline may result in further academic action, including possible dismissal from the program.
- **Unacceptable.** The written proposal or oral defense does not demonstrate sufficient clarity, scientific foundation, feasibility, independence, or preparation for doctoral research. The student may submit a revised proposal and complete a second defense no earlier than three months and no later than six months after the initial defense. A second unacceptable outcome will result in dismissal from the Ph.D. program.

Typically, a minimum of one year is needed to complete the research outlined in the approved dissertation proposal before a student is ready to schedule the dissertation defense. The time required may vary based on the nature and scope of the project and should be discussed and agreed upon by the student, their Advisor, and their Dissertation Committee.

d. Required Graduate School Forms

Following successful completion of the dissertation proposal defense, the student must submit all required Graduate School documentation for:

- completion of the written comprehensive examination;
- completion of the oral comprehensive examination;
- approval of the dissertation proposal; and
- revision of the Plan of Study, if applicable.

Students must use the current forms and submission procedures available through the Graduate School Documents and Forms webpage.

This is the appropriate time to finalize the Plan of Study and document any approved course substitutions, waivers, or other changes made during the program. All required documentation must be submitted before the student is formally recorded as having passed the comprehensive examination, advanced to doctoral candidacy, and become eligible to enroll in NTR 799.

H. The Ph.D. Dissertation Proposal Format Guidelines

The dissertation proposal describes the research the student intends to conduct for the Ph.D. degree. It should establish a clear scientific rationale, demonstrate mastery of the relevant literature, and present a rigorous and feasible plan for completing the dissertation research.

The proposal should be developed in close consultation with the dissertation advisor and committee. Although the advisor may provide guidance and feedback, the proposal must reflect the student's independent understanding of the scientific problem, proposed research, and methodological approach.

The proposal should follow an NIH-style format and is recommended to not exceed 12 single-spaced pages, including text, figures, and tables. References do not count toward the page limit. The proposal must use an 11-point font, margins of at least 0.5 inch, and page numbers.

The proposal should include the following sections:

- a. Long-term Goals and Specific Aims (1 page).** This section should provide a concise overview of the proposed research. It should:
 - explain the importance of the area under study;
 - identify the long-term goal of the research program;
 - state the central hypothesis or primary research question;
 - identify two to four specific aims or research questions;
 - briefly describe the overall experimental or analytical approach; and
 - summarize the expected outcomes and significance of the proposed work.
- b. Background and Significance (2-4 pages).** This section should critically synthesize the most relevant literature supporting the proposed research. It should identify important gaps in knowledge, unresolved questions, or controversies that justify the proposed study. The section should be focused and analytical rather than a broad review of the literature. Students are nevertheless expected to demonstrate familiarity with the larger body of research relevant to the project during the oral defense.
- c. Preliminary Studies (2-3 pages).** This section should present preliminary or historical data that support the rationale, feasibility, or methodological approach of the proposed research. Preliminary studies may include:
 - data generated directly by the student;
 - relevant data from the advisor's research program;
 - pilot studies;
 - evidence supporting the proposed hypothesis or research questions; and
- d. Research Design and Methods (5-6 pages).** This section should describe how the proposed research will address the specific aims or research questions. For each aim, the student should include, as applicable:
 - the hypothesis or research question;
 - the rationale for the proposed study;
 - the experimental or study design;
 - participants, samples, or experimental models;
 - procedures and techniques;
 - primary outcomes and measurements;

- data-management and statistical-analysis plans;
- expected results;
- potential limitations or pitfalls;
- alternative approaches; and
- a proposed timeline for completion.

The description should provide enough detail to demonstrate that the student understands the proposed methods and that the research is feasible. It is not intended to serve as a step-by-step laboratory or study protocol.

e. References. The proposal should include complete citations for the key sources referenced in the narrative. References do not count toward the 12-page limit.

f. Appendices. Relevant supporting materials may be included in appendices when appropriate. Examples include questionnaires, screening tools, recruitment materials, survey instruments, interview guides, or other research materials. Appendices do not count toward the 12-page narrative limit but should be limited to materials directly relevant to the proposed research.

Note: Students may be asked to prepare a more extensive literature review in consultation with the advisor or Dissertation Committee. This material may be provided separately for committee review but is not part of the required proposal narrative.

I. Admission to Ph.D. Candidacy:

After completing all required coursework other than NTR 799, the student must successfully complete the written and oral comprehensive examinations. The written comprehensive examination consists of the dissertation proposal, and the oral comprehensive examination consists of the oral defense of that proposal. Upon successful completion of both components and approval of the dissertation proposal, the student must apply to the Graduate School for admission to Ph.D. candidacy.

The student is responsible for submitting the current Application for Admission to Candidacy and any related documentation through the Graduate School Documents and Forms webpage. Students must also ensure that all applicable doctoral forms, academic requirements, and Degree Works or Plan of Study updates have been completed.

Admission to candidacy is required before the student may enroll in NTR 799 and must be formally recorded before the student can graduate. Once enrolled in NTR 799, the student is not allowed to enroll in any other coursework to apply to their terminal degree.

An exception applies to Ph.D. students who are concurrently completing the Post-Baccalaureate Certificate–Dietetic Internship (PBC-DI). Because the PBC-DI is a separate certificate program and its coursework does not apply toward the Ph.D. degree, students may enroll in supervised practice and other required PBC-DI coursework after beginning NTR 799. Students who temporarily pause their

Ph.D. dissertation work to complete the Dietetic Internship may resume NTR 799 upon returning to active dissertation work and must complete all remaining NTR 799 requirements before defending the dissertation.

Ph.D. students who pause their doctoral studies to complete the Dietetic Internship are not eligible for departmental GIA or GRA assistantship support during the Dietetic Internship period because of University employment and enrollment requirements of the Dietetic Internship. Students considering this pathway should consult with the Graduate Program Director and Dietetic Internship Director in advance to plan their enrollment, funding, and timeline for completing both programs.

J. Defending the Dissertation

The dissertation advisor determines when the written dissertation is sufficiently complete and ready to be defended. The student may not schedule the final oral examination without the advisor's approval. Although the defense draft should not require major foreseeable changes, students should expect that revisions may be required following the defense.

The student must provide a complete copy of the dissertation to all Dissertation Committee members no less than two weeks, or 10 business days, before the scheduled defense. The dissertation must be prepared in accordance with the current Graduate School thesis and dissertation formatting and submission requirements.

a. Scheduling the Final Oral Examination

The student is responsible for scheduling the final oral examination in consultation with the advisor and Dissertation Committee. At least two weeks before the defense, the student must submit the required documentation for scheduling the final oral examination, including the defense schedule and dissertation abstract, using the current procedures available through the Graduate School Documents and Forms webpage. The student must also meet the final oral examination deadline published for the intended graduation term.

b. Dissertation Defense

The defense begins with a publicly announced presentation of the completed dissertation research. Members of the University and public community may attend the presentation and participate in the public question period.

Following the public portion, the Dissertation Committee will conduct a closed examination. The student must demonstrate an understanding of the dissertation research, methods, findings, interpretation, limitations, and broader scientific or professional foundations of the work.

After the examination, the committee will deliberate privately and determine the outcome of the defense.

Because the Dissertation Committee previously approved the dissertation proposal, the committee may require revisions needed to address deficiencies, improve interpretation, or ensure that the completed work satisfies doctoral standards. However, the student should

not ordinarily be required at the final defense to undertake a fundamentally new dissertation project or major work unrelated to the approved research plan.

i. Defense Outcomes

The committee may reach one of three outcomes:

Acceptance. The dissertation and oral defense meet departmental expectations. Minor revisions may still be required before final submission. The advisor may supervise and approve these revisions when authorized by the committee.

Provisional Acceptance. The dissertation or oral defense requires substantial revision or additional work before final approval. The committee will provide the student with written expectations and a timeline for completion. Requirements may include revisions to the document, additional analyses, clarification of interpretations, responses to further questions, or another meeting with the committee. All committee members must approve the final dissertation unless the committee delegates final approval to the advisor.

Rejection. The dissertation or oral defense does not meet departmental expectations because of substantial deficiencies in the conduct, analysis, interpretation, documentation, or defense of the research. The committee will determine whether the student may complete additional work or undertake a revised research plan, or whether dismissal from the program should be recommended in accordance with applicable departmental, Graduate School, and University policies.

c. Required Documentation Following the Defense

Following a successful dissertation defense, the student must submit all required Graduate School documentation for:

- reporting the results of the final oral examination;
- documenting final committee approval of the dissertation;
- authorizing electronic publication and release of the dissertation, including any applicable request to restrict access; and
- satisfying any additional doctoral degree-clearance or dissertation-submission requirements in effect at that time.

Students must use the current forms and instructions available through the Graduate School Documents and Forms and Thesis and Dissertation webpages. Approval of the oral defense does not complete the degree. The final dissertation and all required documentation must also be accepted by the Graduate School by the deadlines established for the intended graduation term.

K. Filing the Dissertation with the Graduate School

The dissertation must be prepared, formatted, approved, and submitted in accordance with the current requirements of the Graduate School. Students must use the official UNCG dissertation

template and submit the dissertation electronically through the University's designated electronic thesis and dissertation submission system.

Students must submit an approval copy by the deadline published for the intended graduation term. The Graduate School will review the document for compliance with formatting requirements and notify the student of any required revisions. The student must then submit a final corrected copy and all required documentation by the applicable final deadline. Required documentation generally includes:

- final approval of the dissertation by the Dissertation Committee;
- authorization for electronic publication and release of the dissertation, including any applicable request to restrict access;
- completion of the Survey of Earned Doctorates; and
- any additional documentation required for the dissertation format or content, such as documentation for chapters containing multiple authors.

Students must use the current forms, templates, submission procedures, and deadlines available through the Graduate School Thesis and Dissertation and Documents and Forms webpages.

Students should allow sufficient time for format review and required revisions. The dissertation is not considered complete until the Graduate School has accepted the final document and all required documentation and has issued confirmation that the submission process is complete.

L. Applying for Graduation

Students must apply for graduation through the Graduate School's current electronic application process by the deadline established for the semester or summer term in which they expect to complete the degree.

Students are responsible for reviewing the current application instructions, deadlines, fees, and degree-clearance requirements provided by the Graduate School and University Registrar. Students who do not complete all degree requirements during the term for which they applied may be required to submit a new application and pay an additional fee.

M. Ph.D. Progress Benchmarks

Ph.D. students are expected to make steady progress toward completion of the degree. The following benchmarks provide general guidance:

- **Before beginning the program or during the first semester:** Identify a dissertation advisor and a viable area of research.
- **During the first year:** Form the Dissertation Committee and submit the required committee appointment documentation.
- **During the first two years:** Complete required coursework, finalize the Plan of Study, and develop the dissertation proposal in consultation with the advisor and committee.

- **By the end of the second year or early third year:** Successfully complete the written and oral comprehensive examinations through defense of the dissertation proposal.
- **Following successful completion of the proposal defense:** Submit all required Graduate School documentation for the written and oral comprehensive examinations, dissertation proposal approval, admission to candidacy, and any applicable revisions to the Plan of Study.
- **After admission to candidacy:** Enroll in NTR 799 and complete the approved dissertation research while maintaining regular communication with the advisor and Dissertation Committee.
- **Before the dissertation defense:** Prepare the dissertation in consultation with the advisor, provide the complete dissertation to the committee no less than two weeks or 10 business days before the defense, and submit the required final oral examination scheduling documentation at least two weeks before the defense.
- **At the completion of the dissertation:** Present and defend the dissertation research and submit all required defense and committee-approval documentation.
- **During the intended graduation term:** Apply for graduation and submit the approval and final copies of the dissertation, along with all required forms, by the deadlines established by the Graduate School.

These benchmarks are intended as general expectations. The timing of individual research projects may vary, but students should consult promptly with their advisor and the Graduate Program Director if substantial delays occur.

VIII. Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Dietetic Internship Program (PBC-DI)

The accredited Dietetic Internship is an 18-credit Post-Baccalaureate Certificate administered through the Graduate School and the Department of Nutrition. Students who complete all certificate and graduation requirements will receive an official certificate from UNCG and will be eligible to take the national credentialing examination for Registered Dietitians.

Students must be formally admitted to the Dietetic Internship certificate program, complete all required coursework, and apply separately for graduation from the certificate program. Certificate requirements and progress toward completion are tracked through Degree Works. Because the curriculum is fixed and completed over two semesters, a separate Plan of Study is not required.

Graduate students completing both a UNCG graduate degree and the Dietetic Internship certificate must be admitted to each program separately. Dietetic Internship courses may also be used to satisfy graduate degree requirements when permitted by the applicable curriculum and Graduate School policies.

Ph.D. students who choose to concurrently enroll in the Dietetic Internship after admission to Ph.D. candidacy and prior to defending their dissertation should refer to the Admission to Ph.D. Candidacy section of this manual for additional guidance regarding enrollment restrictions, NTR 799, and assistantship eligibility.

Students completing both a graduate degree and the certificate must apply separately for graduation from each program. All required coursework must be completed and all incomplete grades resolved before the applicable degree or certificate can be awarded.

Current curriculum, admission, and completion requirements are provided in the University Catalog and Dietetic Internship program materials. Questions regarding the Dietetic Internship curriculum or graduation requirements should be directed to the Dietetic Internship Director.

A. Post-BS Certificate – Dietetic Internship course work

a. Required Courses (18 hours)

- NTR 602 – Supervised Preparation for Professional and Community Engagement (3)
- NTR 624 – Supervised Preparation for Culinary Medicine (3)
- NTR 693 – Supervised Preparation for Practicum in Clinical Dietetics (3)
- NTR 606A – Practicum in Clinical Dietetics (3)
- NTR 606B – Practicum in Clinical Dietetics (3)
- NTR 606C – Practicum in Clinical Dietetics (3)

NTR 602, NTR 624, and NTR 693 must each be completed with a grade of B or better before the student may enroll in NTR 606A, NTR 606B, or NTR 606C.

b. Recommended Courses for Sport Centered Careers

- NTR 676 – Nutrition and Physical Performance (3)

c. Additional Information

Certificate requirements and progress toward completion are tracked through Degree Works. A separate Plan of Study is not required. Students who complete all required coursework and graduation requirements will receive a Post-Baccalaureate Certificate from the Graduate School and will be eligible to take the national credentialing examination for the Registered Dietitian credential.

Students must apply for graduation from the certificate program through the current Graduate School process by the applicable deadline.

B. Combining a M.S. Non-thesis with the Post-B.S. Certificate - Dietetic Internship

M.S. non-thesis students who wish to become Registered Dietitian Nutritionists may be eligible to enter the UNCG Post-Baccalaureate Certificate – Dietetic Internship before completing the M.S. degree. Eligibility is determined individually and depends on completion of all Dietetic Internship admission requirements, including the required Didactic Program in Dietetics preparation.

Students interested in this option should consult with the Didactic Program in Dietetics Director and Dietetic Internship Director as early as possible after entering the M.S. program. Admission to the Dietetic Internship is competitive and requires a separate application.

Students admitted to both programs must complete the requirements of each program and apply separately for graduation from the M.S. degree and Dietetic Internship certificate.

C. Early-Decision Application to the Dietetic Internship

The Dietetic Internship may offer an early-decision application process for eligible current UNCG students. Participation in the early-decision process does not guarantee admission, and the number of available positions may vary from year to year.

Applicants must satisfy all current Dietetic Internship eligibility and application requirements, including completion or anticipated completion of an ACEND-accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics and submission of the required verification statement or declaration of intent.

Students interested in early decision should consult with the Didactic Program in Dietetics Director and Dietetic Internship Director early in their program to confirm their eligibility, application requirements, and deadlines.

Students must complete the current application and interview process established by the Dietetic Internship. Applicants who accept an early-decision offer must complete all required acceptance documentation and comply with any applicable ACEND, DICAS, or program requirements.

Current eligibility criteria, application materials, deadlines, and acceptance procedures are provided in the Dietetic Internship program materials.

IX. Master of Science Dietetic Internship (M.S./D.I.) Program

The Master of Science in Nutrition–Dietetic Internship (M.S./D.I.) is an accredited graduate program that integrates advanced graduate coursework in nutrition with supervised practice experiences required for eligibility to become a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist. The program is designed for students who have completed a bachelor’s degree and an ACEND-accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics and who hold, or are eligible to receive, a DPD Verification Statement.

The M.S./D.I. is planned as a 21-month program. Students complete graduate coursework during the first year and supervised preparation and supervised practice experiences during the second year. The Dietetic Internship component requires completion of at least 1,000 hours of supervised experiences, including professional work-setting experiences and other approved supervised learning activities.

Students must be formally admitted to the M.S./D.I. program, complete all required graduate coursework and Dietetic Internship requirements, and satisfy all applicable Graduate School and University requirements for the M.S. degree. Degree requirements and progress toward completion are tracked through Degree Works.

Students must also satisfy all Dietetic Internship completion requirements established by the program and ACEND. Upon successful completion of the M.S. degree and all Dietetic Internship requirements, students will receive the M.S. in Nutrition and a Dietetic Internship Verification Statement, which is required for application for eligibility to take the national credentialing examination for dietitian nutritionists.

Detailed policies and procedures related to supervised practice, site placement, performance expectations, professional conduct, required documentation, and other Dietetic Internship requirements are provided in the M.S./D.I. and PBC/D.I. Program Handbook. Students should consult the Dietetic Internship Director with questions regarding supervised practice or Dietetic Internship requirements.

A. M.S./D.I. Advising

M.S./D.I. students are advised by the Graduate Program Director and the Dietetic Internship Director. The Graduate Program Director provides guidance regarding M.S. degree requirements, graduate coursework, Degree Works, and progress toward degree completion. The Dietetic Internship Director provides guidance regarding Dietetic Internship requirements, supervised preparation and supervised practice experiences, site placement, and completion of requirements for the Dietetic Internship Verification Statement.

Students are responsible for monitoring their academic progress in Degree Works and maintaining regular communication with both the Graduate Program Director and Dietetic Internship Director as appropriate. Questions related specifically to supervised practice, Dietetic Internship policies, or ACEND requirements should be directed to the Dietetic Internship Director.

The M.S./D.I. program requires a minimum of 38 credit hours completed over four semesters. Students typically complete 20 credit hours of graduate coursework during the first year, followed by 18 credit hours of supervised preparation and supervised practice coursework during the second year.

B. M.S./D.I. Coursework

a. First-Year M.S. Coursework (20 hours)

Students complete the following required courses:

- NTR 609A – Seminar in Nutrition (1)
- NTR 609B – Seminar in Nutrition (2)
- NTR 676 – Nutrition and Physical Performance (3)

Students must include one of the following statistics courses:

- ERM 680 – Intermediate Statistical Methods in Education (3)
- HEA 604 – Quantitative Methods (3)
- STA 661 – Advanced Statistics in the Behavioral and Biological Sciences I (3)
- HHS 625 – Research Methods in the Health and Human Sciences (3)

Students must also complete approved graduate nutrition coursework selected from 600-level NTR courses. Courses may include:

- NTR 601 – Directed Individual Study in Nutrition
- NTR 607 – Nutrition Education
- NTR 623 – Current Trends in Nutrition
- NTR 625 – Gene Expression and Protein Metabolism
- NTR 626 – Energy, Carbohydrate, and Lipid Metabolism
- NTR 627 – Antioxidants and Bioactive Food Components
- NTR 628 – Vitamins and Minerals
- NTR 673 – Nutrition Research Methodology

Students also complete 3 credit hours of approved elective coursework. The elective may be selected from Nutrition or a related area such as public health, gerontology, human development, social work, or business management. Elective coursework must be approved by the student's advisory committee.

b. Second-Year Dietetic Internship Coursework (18 hours)

During the second year, students complete the supervised preparation and supervised practice components of the Dietetic Internship.

Supervised Preparation (9 hours)

- NTR 602 – Supervised Preparation for Professional and Community Engagement (3)
- NTR 624 – Supervised Preparation for Culinary Medicine (3)
- NTR 693 – Supervised Preparation for Practicum in Clinical Dietetics (3)

Supervised Practice (9 hours)

- NTR 606A – Practicum in Clinical Dietetics: Foodservice Rotation (3)
- NTR 606B – Practicum in Clinical Dietetics: Clinical Rotation (3)
- NTR 606C – Practicum in Clinical Dietetics: Community Rotation (3)

Students must earn a grade of B or better in all required M.S. and supervised preparation coursework before beginning supervised practice at Dietetic Internship placement sites.

c. Additional Information

Degree requirements and progress toward completion are tracked through Degree Works. A separate Plan of Study is not required.

The Dietetic Internship includes a minimum of 1,000 hours of supervised experiences. Students must successfully complete all required coursework, supervised practice hours, required competencies, and other M.S./D.I. program requirements. Detailed requirements governing supervised preparation and supervised practice are provided in the M.S./D.I. and PBC/D.I. Program Handbook.

C. Applying For Graduation

Students must apply for graduation from the M.S. program through the current Graduate School process by the applicable deadline. Completion of the M.S. degree and all Dietetic Internship requirements is required before the Dietetic Internship Verification Statement can be issued.

X. FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH AND TRAVEL

The Department seeks to provide financial support to eligible graduate students when resources are available. This support is intended to help students meet the costs of graduate study and to provide assistance with departmental teaching, research, and related responsibilities.

Financial support is limited, awarded competitively, and not guaranteed. Continued support is contingent on satisfactory academic progress, compliance with University and departmental conduct expectations, and acceptable performance in any assigned GIA or GRA role. Students who do not meet these expectations may have their financial support reevaluated, reduced, or terminated.

A. Departmental Assistantships

Initial assistantship offers are typically made at or shortly after admission, with priority generally given to Ph.D. students. Because departmental funding is limited, students who do not receive an assistantship at admission should not assume that support will become available later.

Departmental assistantships are generally nine-month appointments. The Department primarily employs Graduate Instructional Assistants (GIAs) and Graduate Research Assistants (GRAs). Assignments may include instructional support, research, administrative duties, or a combination of responsibilities. Students with full assistantships are normally assigned a total of 20 hours of work per week.

Students who accept an assistantship must complete all required University hiring and payroll documentation by the stated deadlines. After accepting the assistantship offer, the student will receive instructions for completing the applicable employment forms and onboarding requirements, including employment-eligibility verification such as Form I-9.

Assistantship payments cannot be issued until all required hiring, payroll, tax, direct-deposit, and employment-verification documentation has been completed and approved. Students must also attend all required graduate student employee orientation and onboarding sessions, including the orientation held before the beginning of the academic-year appointment. Students are responsible for responding promptly to requests from University Human Resources, Payroll, the Graduate School, or other offices involved in the hiring and onboarding process.

Assistantship assignments are made by the Graduate Program Director in consultation with the Graduate Committee, Department Chair, faculty supervisors, and program needs. Workloads may vary across the semester depending on instructional schedules, research activities, and other assigned responsibilities. Students are expected to complete all assigned duties and maintain satisfactory performance. Failure to fulfill assistantship responsibilities may result in reevaluation or termination of the assistantship and associated tuition support.

GIAs are employees of the Department of Nutrition rather than of an individual faculty member. Although a GIA may be assigned primarily to support a particular faculty member or course during a semester, the student may also be asked to assist with other reasonable department-related instructional, administrative, or program activities within the scope and hours of the assistantship.

Students who believe that assigned duties exceed the scope or hours of the assistantship should first discuss the concern with the faculty supervisor. Unresolved concerns should be reported promptly to the Graduate Program Director or Department Chair.

Students must follow the official Graduate School assistantship work calendar for appointment start and end dates, required work periods, and University holidays.

Assistantship stipends may also be supported by individual faculty grants or other research funds. These appointments are generally tied to specific research projects and are dependent on the availability and duration of the funding. Summer support may be available from the Graduate School, Department, or individual faculty members but is not guaranteed.

Assistantship stipends and tuition support are awarded separately. A student may receive a stipend without receiving full tuition support. Available tuition assistance may include in-state or out-of-state tuition support, depending on funding and eligibility.

Out-of-state students who receive an assistantship stipend, tuition waiver, or other tuition assistance are expected to seek reevaluation of their residency classification after their first year of receiving support. Students should refer to the handbook section on Residency for Tuition Purposes for additional information.

Assistantship stipends are distributed according to the University payroll schedule.

B. Scholarships and Fellowships

The School of Health and Human Sciences and the Department of Nutrition offer a limited number of scholarships and fellowships to eligible graduate students. Award amounts, eligibility criteria, and funding availability may vary from year to year. Awards may be based on academic merit, financial need, or other criteria established by the funding source.

Information about available awards, application requirements, and deadlines is distributed annually and posted through the School and Department. The application deadline is typically early in the spring semester for awards supporting the following academic year. Students must submit all

required application materials by the applicable deadline to be considered for funding. Submission of an application does not guarantee an award.

C. Summer Assistantships

Summer assistantship funding may be available through the Graduate School, the School of Health and Human Sciences, the Department of Nutrition, or individual faculty research programs. Availability, award amounts, eligibility criteria, and appointment periods may vary from year to year.

When summer funding opportunities are available, the Department Chair or Graduate Program Director will provide information about eligibility, application or nomination procedures, and deadlines. Awards are competitive and are not guaranteed.

D. External Grants

Graduate students are encouraged to seek external funding to support research, professional development, and progress toward degree completion. Potential opportunities may be available through federal agencies, private foundations, professional organizations, and other sponsors.

Students should work closely with their advisor to identify appropriate funding opportunities and prepare competitive applications. Applications submitted on behalf of the University or involving institutional commitments may require review and approval through the appropriate University research administration office before submission.

Projects involving human participants, animals, biohazards, or other regulated research activities must receive all required institutional approvals before the proposed work begins. Students are responsible for allowing sufficient time for internal review, proposal routing, and regulatory approval.

E. Other Funding for Research and Professional Travel

Limited funding may be available to support graduate student research, conference participation, professional development, and travel. Funding sources, eligibility requirements, award amounts, and application procedures may change from year to year. Students should begin seeking support well in advance of the proposed activity.

Department of Nutrition Funding: When funds are available, the Department may provide partial support for graduate students presenting original research at professional meetings or participating in other approved professional activities. Students seeking departmental support must:

- consult with their advisor before making travel arrangements;
- submit the current Department of Nutrition graduate student funding request;
- provide the required information and documentation by the stated deadline; and
- complete all University travel authorization and reimbursement procedures.

Departmental support is limited and is not guaranteed. Faculty members may also have grant or research funds available to support student research or travel related to a specific project.

School of Health and Human Sciences Funding: The School of Health and Human Sciences may offer funding for graduate student research, travel, or professional development when resources are available. Eligibility, priorities, deadlines, and application procedures are established by the School and may vary each year. Students should review current School funding announcements and consult with their advisor or the appropriate School office before applying.

Graduate Student Association Funding: The Graduate Student Association may provide competitive funding for professional development, conference participation, research, and capstone-related expenses. Available funding programs, eligible expenses, application windows, and award limits may change by semester. Students must follow the current Graduate Student Association application and reimbursement or purchasing procedures. Funding is limited, application-based, and not guaranteed.

Student Government Association Funding: Graduate students participating in a recognized student organization, including the Nutrition Graduate Student Association, may be eligible to seek funding through applicable University student-government or student-organization processes. Eligibility may depend on the organization's recognition status, available allocations, and compliance with current University financial and travel procedures. Students should consult the organization's officers and current University guidance before making commitments or incurring expenses.

Travel Authorization and Reimbursement: Students traveling on University business must obtain all required approvals before travel and must follow current University purchasing, travel, and reimbursement procedures. Students should not assume that expenses will be reimbursed unless funding and travel authorization have been approved in advance.

Students are responsible for retaining and submitting all required documentation within 30 days of the last day of travel or by other funding-based deadlines.

F. Scholarly Activities

Graduate students are encouraged to present their research at professional conferences, symposia, and other scholarly meetings. These activities provide opportunities to communicate research findings, receive feedback, build professional networks, and engage with faculty, students, and professionals from other institutions.

Students should work with their advisor to identify appropriate venues, determine whether the research is ready for presentation, and meet applicable abstract-submission and registration deadlines. Relevant opportunities may include national, regional, state, and discipline-specific meetings.

Students presenting research conducted at UNCG must follow all applicable authorship, research-compliance, confidentiality, and University travel requirements.

When participating in professional meetings or other scholarly activities as a UNCG student, students represent the Department of Nutrition and the University. University and departmental standards of conduct remain in effect, and students are expected to behave professionally in all conference, travel, networking, and social settings associated with the activity.

XI. APPENDICES

Appendix A.

The Graduate Student-Faculty Compact

Graduate education is a shared responsibility among students, faculty advisors, committee members, and the Department. Productive graduate training requires professional conduct, clear communication, academic integrity, appropriate supervision, and mutual respect.

Graduate Student Responsibilities

Graduate students are expected to:

- conduct themselves professionally, respectfully, and in accordance with University and departmental policies;
- take primary responsibility for understanding and completing degree requirements, required forms, and applicable deadlines;
- maintain regular communication with their advisor and committee regarding academic progress, research activities, and concerns that may affect degree completion;
- devote appropriate time and effort to coursework, research, assistantship responsibilities, and professional development;
- take initiative in seeking guidance, asking questions, and developing the knowledge and skills required for independent work;
- conduct coursework, examinations, research, data collection, analysis, and reporting with the highest standards of academic and research integrity;
- maintain accurate and complete research records and follow all applicable research, safety, confidentiality, and regulatory requirements;
- protect confidential, unpublished, proprietary, or sensitive information associated with faculty, collaborators, research participants, and research projects;
- appropriately acknowledge the intellectual, technical, financial, and other contributions of advisors, collaborators, and research-team members in presentations, publications, and other scholarly products; and
- recognize that faculty time, research resources, funding, and personnel must be allocated across multiple teaching, research, service, and mentoring responsibilities.

Graduate Faculty Responsibilities

Graduate faculty members are expected to:

- interact with students professionally, respectfully, and in accordance with University policies;
- provide appropriate academic, research, and professional guidance within the scope of the faculty member's role;

- communicate expectations regarding academic progress, research responsibilities, authorship, data management, assistantship duties, and professional conduct;
- provide timely and constructive feedback on student work and communicate significant concerns when they arise;
- evaluate student performance fairly and based on relevant academic, research, and professional standards;
- support an educational environment free from discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and other prohibited conduct;
- avoid personal, professional, financial, or supervisory conflicts of interest and disclose or address potential conflicts in accordance with University policy;
- teach and model responsible and ethical research practices;
- protect the integrity, accuracy, and appropriate stewardship of research conducted under their supervision;
- appropriately acknowledge student contributions to research, presentations, publications, funding applications, intellectual property, and other scholarly work; and
- recognize the student's developing independence and support reasonable progress toward completion of the degree.

Shared Responsibilities

Students and faculty share responsibility for:

- establishing clear and realistic expectations;
- communicating regularly and addressing concerns promptly;
- maintaining accurate records of academic and research decisions;
- supporting a professional, inclusive, and intellectually rigorous environment;
- following applicable University, Graduate School, departmental, and professional policies; and
- seeking assistance from the Graduate Program Director, Department Chair, or appropriate University office when concerns cannot be resolved within the advising relationship.

Appendix B.

Department Faculty and Research Expertise

The Department of Nutrition includes faculty with expertise spanning basic, clinical, community, and translational nutrition research. Areas of faculty scholarship include obesity and energy metabolism, nutritional neuroscience, micronutrients, liver and adipose biology, cancer prevention, maternal and child nutrition, human milk and lactation, food insecurity, community nutrition, dietary behavior, and nutrition education.

Current faculty profiles, academic credentials, research interests, laboratory information, and contact information are maintained on the Department of Nutrition website:

Department of Nutrition Faculty and Staff (<https://ntr.uncg.edu/people/>)

Students seeking a research advisor or committee member should review the current faculty profiles and discuss potential faculty matches with the Graduate Program Director. Inclusion on the Department website does not necessarily indicate that a faculty member is accepting new graduate students or is eligible to serve in every graduate faculty role.

Current program leadership and administrative contacts are also listed on the Department website.

Appendix C.

Research Data Stewardship, Access, and Use

Research data and materials generated through research conducted at or under the auspices of UNCG are governed by University policy, applicable sponsor requirements, research protocols, contractual agreements, and other legal or regulatory requirements.

The Principal Investigator is the primary custodian and steward of research data and materials generated through a research project. Students participating in research are responsible for following the data-management, documentation, storage, security, confidentiality, and retention procedures established by the Principal Investigator and the University.

Research data and materials may include, but are not limited to:

- laboratory notebooks and research notes;
- electronic and paper data files;
- instrument outputs;
- biological specimens and other research materials;
- photographs, recordings, and images;
- protocols and analytical procedures; and
- other records needed to document or validate the research.

Fabrication, falsification, unauthorized alteration, selective omission, destruction, or misrepresentation of research data is prohibited and may constitute research misconduct. Such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including removal from a research project, termination of an assistantship or other University employment, dismissal from the graduate program, and additional sanctions under applicable University policies and procedures.

Students may not enter, upload, transmit, or otherwise provide raw research data, research records, participant information, unpublished findings, protocols, laboratory notes, images, recordings, or other nonpublic research materials to a generative artificial intelligence system or other external automated platform without the express prior authorization of the Principal Investigator or research advisor. Any approved use must also comply with applicable University policies, research protocols, informed-consent requirements, data-use agreements, sponsor requirements, confidentiality obligations, and information-security standards. De-identification of data does not, by itself, authorize its use in an artificial intelligence system.

Original research records and materials must remain under the custody required by University policy and the Principal Investigator. Students may not remove, destroy, transfer, share, publish, or otherwise use research data or materials without appropriate authorization.

Students leaving a research group or completing their degree may be permitted to retain copies of data from projects on which they worked when approved by the Principal Investigator and when doing so is consistent with University policy, research-participant protections, sponsor requirements, confidentiality obligations, intellectual-property requirements, and other applicable agreements. Primary research data and materials must remain in the custody designated by the University.

Permission to retain a copy of research data does not provide unrestricted authority to publish, present, share, distribute, or conduct additional analyses using those data. Students must obtain approval from the Principal Investigator and any other required individuals or offices before further use or dissemination.

Expectations regarding data access, authorship, publication, intellectual property, and the completion of manuscripts should be discussed early in the research process and revisited as needed. When appropriate, these expectations should be documented in writing.

Questions or disputes concerning research data, authorship, intellectual property, or access should first be discussed with the Principal Investigator. Unresolved concerns may be brought to the Graduate Program Director, Department Chair, or the appropriate University research-administration or research-integrity office.

Students and faculty must follow the current UNCG policies governing access to and retention of research data, intellectual property, research integrity, and related research activities.