

The Mission of the Simmons College Didactic Program in Dietetics

The mission of the Simmons College Didactic Program in Dietetics is subsumed within that of the Department of Nutrition. The mission of the Simmons College Department of Nutrition is twofold. The first is to educate students and foster an appreciation of lifelong learning in preparation for their success in advanced nutrition or dietetics education or employment so that they can be effective in a profession that works to affect the eating behaviors and subsequent health and quality of life of a multicultural and diverse population, a profession that adds to the scientific investigation about food and health, and one that fosters an appreciation of food's relationship to other sciences; and second, to provide the College community with the intellectual basis and professional expertise for achieving and/or maintaining health through food habits.

Program Goals and Objectives

The Nutrition Department is dedicated to quality teaching and learning. The following are the goals of Simmons College Didactic Program in Dietetics. The DPD goals are consistent with the mission of the College and the corresponding college goals; this is illustrated below by showing the college-wide goal that correspond to each of the Simmons College DPD goals

1. The Simmons College DPD will prepare graduates capable of becoming competent entry level professionals.
2. The DPD will prepare graduates capable of succeeding in one or more of the following: a graduate program related to nutrition or dietetics, an accredited dietetic internship program (DIP), or employment.
3. The DPD will prepare graduates who are capable of serving a culturally diverse population with understanding and respect.
4. The DPD will prepare graduates who are technologically capable in their profession.

As part of our accreditation requirements set forth by the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education of the American Dietetic Association we have set forth measurable outcome objectives which track our progress toward attaining the aforementioned goals. These include: 1) tracking of graduates to assess Dietetic Internship Program, graduate school or employment placement, 2) graduate assessment of their competence in specific areas of nutrition and dietetics, as well as their assessment of their technological capability as well as their capability to serve a culturally diverse population.

Below you will find a more detailed description of the Simmons College DPD including coursework requirements.

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The Simmons College Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD)¹

The Didactic Program in Dietetics fulfills one of the requirements for becoming a Registered Dietitian. The courses required for this program (shown below) can be completed within the context of the Simmons College curriculum either as a part of a Bachelor's degree or in addition to an already completed Bachelor's degree. Even students who have already obtained a Bachelor's degree in a different discipline can fulfill this coursework to apply for a supervised practice program (e.g., dietetic internship). The American Dietetic Association didactic course requirements for the Simmons College DPD are as follows:

General Biology* (Bio 113)
Microbiology* (Bio 221)
Anatomy & Physiology I and II* (Bio 231 + 232)
Inorganic Chemistry* (Chm 111 or 113)
Organic Chemistry* (Chm 112 or 114)
Introductory Biochemistry (Chem 223)
Statistics, introductory (Math 118)
*with Laboratory

Nutrition Courses:

Food Science, beginning (Ntr 101)
Food Science, advanced (201)
Fundamentals of Nutrition (112 or 111)
Clinical Dietetics (231)
Community Nutrition (237)
Food Production (248)
Food Management (249)
Nutrient Metabolism (311)
Advanced Community Nutrition (381)
Medical Nutrition Therapy (334)

In addition, there are two required social science courses; at least one of these should be in sociology or psychology.

It should be noted that fulfilling the aforementioned courses required for the Didactic Program in Dietetics is only one step in the credentialing process for dietetics practitioners. In addition to a minimum of a Bachelor's degree, the undergraduate DPD completion must be followed by an accredited supervised practice program (e.g., a dietetic internship program (DIP)) to ensure eligibility to take the R.D. examination. The application to the DIP is a separate process and completion of the DPD in no way guarantees acceptance into a DIP. For more information on becoming a registered dietitian please see http://www.eatright.org/cps/rde/xchg/SID-5303FFEA-66E62AB5/ada/hs.xsl/home_6658_ENU_HTML.htm

Students must pass a minimum of 5 courses at Simmons College to be eligible to obtain a verification statement from Simmons College even if coursework equivalent to the aforementioned requirements has been completed elsewhere. Students who complete the DPD at Simmons College will receive a verification statement which documents such completion, once they have submitted the following to the DPD director:

- All official transcripts from all colleges attended for credit toward their degree and all colleges attended at which students took courses which fulfilled the DPD requirements (approval of all courses proposed to be taken for the DPD at a college other than Simmons College is required).
- A request for the verification statement (either by e-mail or hard copy). This request should include the student's full name, social security number, and the address to which the verification statements should be sent.
- There is a 1-2 week turn-around time between the time of receipt of all aforementioned and the sending out of the verification statement.

¹ The Simmons College Nutrition Program's Didactic Program in Dietetics is currently granted Accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education of the American Dietetic Association, 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000, Chicago, IL, 60606-6995, tel: (312) 899-5400. (didacticnew.doc on G drive)