



Nutrition Frequently Asked Questions

All general questions about admission, tuition and financial aid and housing will be answered in the Admissions FAQ sheet located here: <http://www.simmons.edu/shs/forms/admfaq.pdf>

I do not have a degree in nutrition. What programs am I eligible for and what must I do to prepare to apply?

You do not need to possess a degree in nutrition to apply to the Master's program. For the online Certificate of Sports Nutrition, you must have a Bachelor's or Master's degree in nutrition, exercise physiology, kinesiology, or sports medicine or related fields such as biology, physical therapy, and nursing. For both programs, you must have a Bachelor's degree and have completed the prerequisites and received grades for these courses within the past ten consecutive years at an accredited U.S. or overseas higher education institution accredited by the Ministry of Education in the home country. For the Dietetic Internship program, you must complete the Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) curriculum as mandated by the American Dietetic Association before applying.

I would like to enter the nutrition field but I am still not sure which program would be right for me.

To decide what program would be right for you, you must consider what path you would like to take in the nutrition field.

If you would like to be a nutritionist, then you would complete the Master's degree in Nutrition. The Certificate in Sports Nutrition would also qualify you to work with clients in the area of wellness and fitness. This certificate does require a certain foundation (see previous information).

If you want to be a registered dietitian (which is required to work in clinical settings such as hospitals), then you would need to complete the coursework for the Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) and the Dietetic Internship, and take the registered dietitian exam mandated by the American Dietetic Association (ADA). The [DPD program](#) is offered through the [Dix Scholars Program](#).

For information about the different curriculum options and career options available to registered dietitians, please see the American Dietetic Association website at www.eatright.org

What is the difference between a registered dietitian and a nutritionist?

The registered dietitian is a qualified nutrition expert who has obtained a bachelor of science or master of science degree in nutrition or a B.S. and all the DPD requirements, has completed a 6-12 month internship, and has passed the registered dietitian exam. The RD is the mark of excellence in the dietetic profession.

In contrast, anyone can call oneself a nutritionist without any specific academic credentials. However, some RDs call themselves nutritionists if they are working in the community, public health or private practice.

What prerequisites courses must be completed before I apply?

The prerequisite courses for the MS in Nutrition and Health Promotion Program can be found here: <http://www.simmons.edu/shs/academics/nutrition/prereqs.shtml>. Grades of B or better are required in these courses. Science courses must include a lab. All courses must have been completed within the past 10 consecutive years. **Please note: In order to apply to our Master's in Nutrition and Health Promotion program, ALL prerequisite courses must be completed or near completion at the time of application.** For example, you may apply while currently enrolled in three remaining required courses. This would allow the faculty admission committee to review/render a decision based on a majority of completed prerequisites.

The prerequisite courses for the Certificate of Sports Nutrition are one semester of Introductory Nutrition (at Simmons, NUTR 111 or NUTR 112) and two semesters of human anatomy and physiology (with labs) (at Simmons, BIOL 231 and BIOL 232). Grades of B or better are required in these courses. You must also have a bachelor's or Master's degree, preferably in nutrition, exercise physiology, kinesiology or sports medicine or related fields such as biology, physical therapy, and nursing. These courses **must** be completed before applying to the program.

The [Didactic Program in Dietetics](#) is the prerequisite for the Dietetic Internship and is administered by the [Dix Scholars Program](#).

How can I complete my prerequisites?

There are two methods to complete prerequisites:

- take classes at Simmons through the [Dorothea Lynde Dix Scholars program](#) before applying;
- complete courses elsewhere and then apply (call the Nutrition program directly at 617-521-2718 prior to enrolling in the course to determine if the specific class will fulfill our requirement)

The prerequisites courses are offered through the [Dix Scholars Program](#). These are undergraduate level courses which are offered during the day. Please contact the Dix Scholars Program Office at 617-521-2500 or dix@simmons.edu to inquire about these courses at Simmons. To see what courses are available for the semester, see the undergraduate [College of Arts and Sciences \(CAS\) registration bulletin](#).

How long will it take me to complete the program?

The Master's program can be completed full time in two academic semesters plus one summer session. Part-time enrollment can take two or three years. For sample curricula, click here: <http://www.simmons.edu/shs/academics/nutrition/curriculum.shtml>

NOTE: All international students requiring a student visa must attend full time.

The Certificate of Sports Nutrition consists of four courses, two of which are offered in the fall (September) term and two of which are offered in the spring (January) term. Therefore, the program may take from one to two years to complete. Federal regulations stipulate that international students may take only one online course per semester in combination with other campus courses to be considered fulltime.

The Dietetic Internship is a 29-week program, beginning in September.

May I still work and attend classes?

All programs except the Dietetic Internship are available on a part-time basis. Most classes are held in the evenings or on weekends. International students must attend full-time and generally are not allowed to work off campus.

When am I able to apply and when do programs start?

Master's and/or Certificate of Sports Nutrition applicants may apply for the fall (September) and spring (January) semesters. You may also apply to the Master's program for the summer (May) start term. Dietetic Internship applicants may apply only for the fall (September) term. International applicants are eligible to apply only for the fall (September) semester.

How do I apply?

For the Master's program, you must complete the standard application. For the Certificate of Sports Nutrition the same application is required; however only two recommendations are necessary and no GREs are required. For the Dietetic Internship program, no GREs are required. However, please include page A of the Simmons application. You must also submit the "Verification Statement" of completion of the Didactic Program in Dietetics.

When are the application deadline dates?

The deadline for Master's and/or Certificate of Sports Nutrition for spring (January) is November 1 and for fall (September) is June 1. You may also apply to the Master's program for summer (May) by the application deadline of March 1. The national application deadline for the Dietetic Internship (both program-arranged and student-proposed) is February 15, 2005 for the fall 2005 semester. Application information and materials for the Dietetic Internship can be found here: <http://www.depdp.org>

When will I learn of my admission status?

Applicants who have submitted all required materials by the specified deadline will be informed of their status on a rolling notification basis. Complete applications will be sent to the Admission Committee for review. Decisions will be made on a "rolling notification" basis for those who have applied on-time. All applicants who apply on-time and enroll in courses full time will be considered for merit awards (scholarships and assistantships). Accepted students who intend to enroll must submit a \$250 non-refundable deposit. Since additional efforts are made to provide applicants with early notification of their status, accepted students who intend to enroll must submit the required enrollment deposit by the specified date. This deposit is applied to the first term bill.

How many total credits are required for the nutrition programs? What is the cost of tuition?

The Master's program is 31 credits in length; and the Certificate of Sports Nutrition and the Dietetic Internship are 12 credits. You can find the current cost per credit hour on our [Tuition and Financial Aid](#) page.

Are scholarships and assistantships available?

There are a limited number of merit scholarships and assistantships available each year for students enrolled in the Master's program. **These stipends do not cover the full cost of tuition.** All applicants are automatically considered for scholarships at the time of application review. Students do not need to submit a special application for scholarships. Accepted students will be notified of such scholarships and assistantships in the letter of admission or shortly thereafter.

How do I become a registered dietitian?

- Complete the course work which meets the requirements for the Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) as shown here: <http://www.simmons.edu/shs/academics/nutrition/faq.shtml#dpd> from a college program approved by CADE (Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education);
- Upon completion of these courses obtain a "Verification Statement" (completion of academic/practice requirements in dietetics) signed by the dietetics program director of an approved nutrition program at a college or university;
- Apply to an accredited/approved Dietetic Internship Program and successfully complete the program;
- Apply to take the national registration examination for dietitians; and

- Pass the registration examination

Am I able to complete all the requirements at Simmons to become a registered dietitian?

Yes, the Program in Nutrition offers all the requisite courses needed to meet the Didactic Program in Dietetics requirements of the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education. These courses are also necessary prerequisites to apply to a Dietetic Internship Program. Simmons offers the 29-week Dietetic Internship focusing on community nutrition and disease prevention. Graduates of the Simmons nutrition program are not guaranteed an internship placement at Simmons since this is a national internship program. The internship is a prerequisite for the national dietetic registration exam. When this exam is passed, the individual uses "RD" to indicate he/she is a registered dietitian.

Is it possible to combine the required courses needed to become a registered dietitian with the Master's Degree Program?

Yes, you can. When applying to the M.S. program, indicate on Page A of the Simmons application that you also wish to complete the Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) requirements necessary for application to a dietetic internship program. Upon completion of a dietetic internship, a student can take the exam to become a registered dietitian (RD). This option takes a little more planning and more time. Please be advised that you are **not eligible** for federal financial aid for taking DPD courses since these are considered non-degree. Contact directly the Office of Student Financial Services at 617-521-2001 for specific details.

How much longer will it take to complete this combined academic program?

The M.S. Program alone takes one academic year of full-time study and a summer semester. Your previous undergraduate courses dictate how long the combined program will take and is dependent upon whether or not some of the required courses were previously taken at the undergraduate level. If all the requirements need to be taken, the program will take longer to complete.

One semester each of the following undergraduate science courses (including laboratory components) are requirements to become a registered dietitian. The asterisked courses are the prerequisites for applying to the Simmons M.S. Program in Nutrition and Health Promotion.

1. Inorganic Chemistry *
2. Organic Chemistry *
3. Biochemistry (lab not required)
4. General Biology
5. Human Anatomy and Physiology I *
6. Human Anatomy and Physiology II *
7. Microbiology
8. Statistics*

One semester each of the following undergraduate nutrition courses is required to meet the [Didactic Program in Dietetics](#) (DPD) requirements necessary for application to a dietetic internship. The asterisked courses are the prerequisites for applying to the Simmons M.S. Program in Nutrition and Health Promotion:

1. Fundamentals of Nutrition*
2. Introduction to Community Nutrition*
3. Human Nutrition*
4. Introductory Foods
5. Advanced Food Science
6. Food Production and Service Systems
7. Medical Nutrition Therapy
8. Management of Food Services Systems

Other requirements are met by the graduate courses. If all of the science courses have been completed, the program will take approximately 2.5 years. Some science courses could be taken during the first year of the combined program. There are approximately 40 credits of nutrition-based courses in the dietetics program. For more detailed information see the [Didactic Program in Dietetics](#) requirements on the undergraduate website.

If I want to apply to both the Graduate Program in Nutrition and Health Promotion and the Dietetic Internship Program, can I use one application?

Yes, submit the Dietetic Internship Program (or ADA Supervised Practice) application and Page A of the Simmons Application for Admission for Graduate Nutrition. Please remember that you must also submit GREs for consideration to the MS program but not for the internship program. Only one application fee is required.

Can I apply to all three programs?

Yes, if you meet all the necessary requirements for all programs. Indicate on Page A of the Simmons application that you would like to apply to all three programs. Only one application fee is required.

If accepted to more than one program, how can I complete them at the same time?

It is possible to be accepted and enrolled in ALL programs. However, since the 29-week dietetic internship program is a full-time commitment, the M.S. and/or Certificate of Sports Nutrition programs must be started on a part-time basis during that time. The graduate program courses are offered in the evening. Students have found it feasible to take one or two courses a semester while enrolled in the Dietetic Internship Program. Once the Dietetic Internship Program is completed, the student has the option of completing the Master's degree and/or Certificate of Sports Nutrition on either a full- or part-time basis (non-U.S. students must be enrolled full-time).

Are credits earned in the Simmons Dietetic Internship Program transferable to the Simmons Master's degree program in nutrition?

The Simmons Dietetic Internship Program awards 9 credits for the fieldwork component and 3 credits for the didactic graduate course. Simmons accepts the 3 credits for the didactic course work towards the M.S. degree.

May I take online Sports Nutrition courses if I am a M.S. student?

Two Certificate in Sports Nutrition courses are required as part of the Master's nutrition program. Students enrolled in or considering the Master's program can also use one Certificate of Sports Nutrition course as an elective in the Master's program. All courses in the Certificate in Sports Nutrition program are online. *However, to receive the certificate, you must formally apply and be accepted into the program before completing any courses.*

How many openings does Simmons have for dietetic interns?

Simmons offers 6 program-arranged dietetic internships and 2 student-proposed, distance placements. The distance placement requires that you live in the area in order to attend campus classes. It is the student's responsibility to identify a dietetic rotation site and obtain approval in advance by the Simmons Nutrition Department Chair.

For the Student-Proposed Distance Dietetic Internships, do I ever have to come to campus?

Yes, students are required to take a graduate-level course that meets once a week from September through the beginning of December. Therefore, we expect, but do not require, that potential applicants live within a two-hour radius of Simmons College (i.e. Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Southern New Hampshire, Southern Maine, Eastern Connecticut, etc.). For more information about the Student-proposed Distance DIP option, see here:

http://www.simmons.edu/shs/academics/nutrition/degrees/dietetic_distance.shtml

Am I able to apply to both the Program-arranged and the Student-Proposed Distance Dietetic Internship?

No, you must apply to one or the other.

I am a Simmons undergraduate and I am thinking about applying to the MS program. What procedure would I follow?

Simmons undergraduate students with an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher may apply for the Master's program at the end of their junior year (deadline: June 1) by contacting the Nutrition Department to obtain an application, not through the Office of Admission at the School for Health Studies. Additionally, Simmons undergraduate students who apply and are accepted to the Master's program take the last six credit hours of their program tuition-free. All Simmons nutrition undergraduates who have graduated within the last five years may waive the GRE; however, they are not eligible to complete the last six credit hours tuition free.

I am an international student and I am interested in Nutrition. What do I need to do?

International students who are interested in the Master's program must complete the required prerequisites like all other applicants. However, you must be enrolled full-time to be eligible for a visa.

International students in the U.S. who are interested in the online Certificate of Sports Nutrition program are allowed to enroll in online distance courses but, due to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services rules, for no more than the equivalent of one class or three credits per semester. This class may be counted toward the full course of study requirement if the class does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, exams, or other purposes. The course may be an elective or required course. Students may take other online courses but only in future terms, and only one course per semester.

International students who are interested in the Dietetic Internship program should first read the American Dietetic Association's FAQ sheet for international students. Even if all of the prerequisites are completed, international students must still take five additional courses here at Simmons before being issued a statement of verification of completion of the DPD. However, those courses can consist of Master's level coursework.

Are there special Master's program options for non-Simmons Dietetic Interns?

Yes, Brigham and Women's and Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital Dietetic Interns are eligible to apply to the Master's program at Simmons and are eligible to waive certain requirements. Interns must submit page A of the Simmons application and all official transcripts from all post-secondary schools attended (whether or not a degree was awarded). The application fee and the GRE scores are waived. Contact your individual internship supervisor regarding recommendations to our program. All [application deadlines](#) apply to such students.