

Welcome to the
**Central Michigan
University**
Dietetic Internship



**CENTRAL
MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY**

School of Rehabilitation and Medical Sciences

The Herbert H. & Grace A. Dow College of Health
Professions

Handbook revised: July 2025

Welcome to the Central Michigan University Dietetic Internship!

We are excited to welcome you to the Central Michigan University Dietetic Internship! After many years of course work and education in the field, the next challenge is ahead of you: learning to perform as a dietitian in all areas of practice. You are promised 28 of the most challenging, productive, and educational weeks you'll ever experience in the practice of dietetics. Upon successful completion of the internship and master's degree, you'll be registration-eligible and ready to step into an entry-level dietetics position.

The Central Michigan University Dietetic Internship (CMUDI) continues the tradition of excellence in dietetic education that began as the TriCity Dietetic Internship in 1974. Beginning in 1993, the program was sponsored by Central Michigan University's (CMU) Department of Human Environmental Studies. In July 2019, the internship became sponsored by the Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow College of Health Professions at CMU. The CMUDI is a unique partnership between a public university and medical centers located in Alma, Bay City, Flint, Midland, Mt Pleasant, and Saginaw. These outstanding facilities provide program direction and learning experiences for interns.

The CMUDI is a 28 week, 1114-hour program and is currently granted accreditation by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND). All rotations, including the basic clinical, foodservice administration, and clinical elective, are approximately 40 hours per week (this may include some weekend hours). Internship graduates with a master's degree qualify to take the Registration Examination for dietitians. As an intern, you will learn to practice at entry level competency in clinical dietetics, foodservice management, and community nutrition as well as earn twelve hours of graduate credit through CMU's College of Graduate Studies. These credits may be applied to the CMU master's in nutrition and dietetics program.

Our consortium structure allows us to offer some unique educational opportunities that the more traditional single institution sponsored internship cannot provide. For example, you can compare several approaches to dietetic practice rather than one approach. We are also able to offer each intern 10 full weeks of basic clinical experience before moving on to clinical specialties.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide some basic information and helpful hints to prepare you for your coming weeks of professional growth. Read cover to cover and please don't hesitate to call me at 989-774-7605 if you have additional questions. Also, please keep me updated on any phone number or mailing address changes.

Congratulations on this next step towards your goals!

Stephanie Schacher, MS, RDN, FAND

Dietetic Internship/Supervised Experiential Learning Manager

Director, Dietetic Internship

Schac1st@cmich.edu

Statement of Mission-Philosophy-Goals

Mission: To provide focused, hands-on educational experiences and a variety of supervised practice settings for future dietetics practitioners.

Goals:

1. Prepare graduates to become competent, diverse, dietetics practitioners who will meet the employment needs in Michigan and the community.
2. Prepare graduates who maintain professional involvement and strive for continued professional growth.

Goal #1 objectives:

1. At least 80% of program interns complete program/degree requirements within 10.5 months (150% of the program length).
2. Of graduates who seek employment, 80% percent are employed in nutrition and dietetics or related fields within 12 months of graduation.
3. 85% of program graduates take the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists within 12 months of program completion.
4. The program's one-year pass rate (graduates who pass the registration exam within one year of first attempt) on the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists is at least 80%.
5. 80% of employers will rank program graduates with a mean rating of 3 or better (1-5 scale) in graduate preparation for entry-level practice.
6. 50% of program graduates employed in dietetics will be employed in Michigan.

Goal #2 objectives:

1. 80% of program graduates will plan to continue with AND membership.
2. 80% of program graduates will plan to be active with their state or local dietetic association.

Program goals are reviewed on an ongoing basis based upon the feedback from our internal and external stakeholders, including the interns, faculty, preceptors, and members of our Advisory Council. Feedback is obtained via survey, direct communication, and site visits. These goals will build the knowledge foundation and expectations for service excellence, which will meet the mission statements of the internship, the department, college, and university.

Recent Participating Institutions and Agencies

Participating Hospitals

Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center

Covenant Healthcare

Hurley Medical Center

McLaren Regional Medical Center-Bay City, Flint and Mt Pleasant

MyMichigan Medical Center-Alma, Midland, Saginaw

Agencies

Diabetes Centers

Dialysis Centers

Health Departments

Long Term Care Facilities

MSU Extension

PACE Senior Care

Private Practice Agencies

Schools

United Dairy Industry

Name Tags

A nametag will be provided during orientation week. It is to be worn on duty and during class days. The nametag appears as:

Some institutions
identification badges
worn while on duty in

Chris Clark
CMU Dietetic Intern

provide their own
and require that they be
that facility.

Benefits Provided by the CMUDI

The CMUDI provides the following:

- Library privileges at sponsoring hospitals and Central Michigan University.
- Parking while on duty at any of the sponsoring hospitals and affiliations.
- Holidays, including New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Yom Kipper and Hanukkah if observed.

Financial Responsibility

Interns are responsible for all personal and professional expenses generated, unless otherwise stipulated (See Program Benefits).

Prior to orientation, you should arrange for appropriate housing and telephone service. Please do not secure housing until you get your site rotation from the Dietetic Internship

Manager. There are several apartment complexes, and two or more interns may choose to rent an apartment together. Please be sure to send your internship address as soon as you know what it is.

A reliable automobile is a must. Transportation will be your responsibility and time lost due to car problems will need to be made up. The public transportation systems in Bay City, Flint, Midland, Mt Pleasant and Saginaw are quite limited. Your car should also be prepared and equipped for safe driving in hazardous winter conditions.

Automobile insurance which complies with State of Michigan regulations must be carried and proof of insurance is required by the first day of orientation. Your local insurance agent can help you make arrangements.

Health care insurance is required, and interns are responsible for the cost of healthcare. The name of the company and the policy number are required by the first day of orientation.

Interns must pass a medical examination at their own expense before full admission to the internship is granted. An immunization record, background check and drug screen are also required. Forms are provided by the clinical compliance officer and must be completed in full.

Interns must provide appropriate uniforms and other professional attire as defined in the CMUDI Policies and Procedures. Textbooks and notes from major courses in nutrition, diet therapy, anatomy, physiology, and institution management will be helpful. Interns have access to departmental libraries and medical libraries in all the hospitals. Students must have their own computer and printer and have access to e-mail and the Internet.

Please purchase the book *The Essential Pocket Guide for Clinical Nutrition, Fourth Edition* by the start of the internship.

The cost of affiliate membership in the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is the responsibility of each intern.

Expenses after completing the internship include Academy active membership fee and dues, and registration examination fees.

Internship Expenses

A non-refundable application fee of \$50 is collected at the time of application to the internship. Send a personal check, money order, or cashier's check made payable to CMUDI. Do NOT send cash. Mail payment to:

Central Michigan University
Department of Nutrition and Dietetics
Stephanie Schacher, MS, RDN, FAND
CMUDI

Wightman Hall 106B
Mt Pleasant, MI 48859

New CMU Students (with a master's degree from another university), upon acceptance into the internship, must apply for acceptance into the College of Graduate Studies as a degree-seeking student in the master's in nutrition and dietetics program. The application fee is \$50. Current CMU MSND students have already been accepted into the College of graduate studies and will continue with internship courses.

An intern is eligible to apply for financial aid only if he/she applies to the College of Graduate Studies as a degree-seeking student. Upon appointment to the internship, interns are eligible to apply for financial aid. Financial aid information may be obtained through the CMU's Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid. If you plan to apply for financial aid, contact Lexi Francisco, Scholarships and Financial Aid at franc10a@cmich.edu or 989-774-2724 at your earliest convenience.

The table below provides an estimate of the costs for attending the internship. These are only estimates and actual expenses will vary considerably depending upon each intern's individual needs and spending habits.

Item	Approximate Cost	
	Per Month	Per Year
Graduate School Tuition* (12 credits @ current rate)		Current rate: Cost & Financial Aid
Internship Fee (\$175/credit)		2,100
Food and Housing		11,484
Miscellaneous personal expenses		1,537
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND) membership - student		58
Books, Supplies, lab coat, shoes		1,290
Transportation	~300	2,010

*Graduate School tuition is subject to change. The twelve credits are divided into two semesters, five-spring, seven-summer I for the January program and five-fall, seven-spring for the September program. Fees are subject to change.

CMUDI Learning Experiences

Rotation Emphasis	Number of Weeks/Days	Highlights
Orientation	1 week	Staff introductions, program policies and procedures, evaluation process, introductory skills in dietetic practice.
Basis Clinical Oncology Obstetrics Diabetes Critical Care Weight Management Cardiology General Medicine	10 weeks 5 days/week	Multi-disciplinary team rounds or conferences, charting, nutritional assessments, case studies, nutrition care planning, counseling, group and individual education, professional education, discharge planning, educational materials development, quality management, nutrition support, use of the computer, consulting and home health care.
Clinical Staff Responsibility	3 weeks 5 days/week	Work independently, assuming day to day responsibilities of a staff clinical dietitian.
Specialty Clinical Elective Advanced Diabetes Renal Pediatrics PACE Oncology/Cardiovascular Long Term Care Weight Management Private Practice	2, 3-week rotations 5 days/week	Develop specialized skills in more advanced areas of dietetic practice.

United Dairy Industry		
Hospital Foodservice Management	5 weeks 5 days/week	Work independently assuming responsibilities of a dietician in food service management. You will experience menu planning, catering, inventory, food and supply procurement, cost control, employee scheduling and supervision, employee education, quality management, foodservice system layout and design, use of the computer and equipment selection, use and maintenance.
Community/Public Health	3 weeks 5 days/week	Life span nutrition, group and individual education, professional education, nutrition promotion in the media, newsletter writing, and staff training.

Orientation

The dietetic internship will start with an orientation early January (Spring class) or late September (Fall class) The orientation program is planned to familiarize you with the requirements of the internship and will include staff introductions, intern presentations, program curriculum, program policies and procedures, evaluation process, record keeping, blackboard usage, and introductory skills in dietetic practice. You'll find that orientation is a very busy period in which you're actively involved. Be sure you're organized and ready to go before you start orientation.

Clothing should project a professional image during orientation and throughout the entire internship.

Cell phone use during orientation, internship rotations, and class days should be limited to breaks, lunches, and emergencies. Please defer to your site rotation preceptor for location specific cell phone use policies.

Scheduling of Duty Time

CMUDI does not adhere to the CMU campus academic calendar. The internship offers two start dates annually. Fall start interns begin late September and continues until April. Spring start interns begin early January and continues until early August. During orientation you will receive a copy of your rotation schedule for the 28 weeks. The supervising preceptor at each rotation will schedule your activities while at each of the rotations. Contact your preceptor at least 6 weeks prior to each rotation to determine your starting time and complete onboarding activities as necessary. Clinical and Community rotations are generally scheduled for 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Foodservice rotations vary considerably with many early or late morning starting times. If you have

childcare needs, be sure to plan well ahead for an ever-changing schedule.

What can you do to prepare for the internship?

Once orientation starts, time moves quickly. To help prepare for success in this fast-paced internship, it is recommended to get your personal management systems set up before you start the program.

The internship is physically and mentally demanding, as well as time consuming, you may want to start by getting your support systems organized ---your family, friends, and significant others will play a major role in getting you through a very challenging 7 months. If you don't already have them, develop stress reduction techniques that work for you.

If you have childcare needs, be sure to make flexible arrangements well ahead of time to develop a good childcare support system. Your schedule during the internship will include many early morning starting times, occasional night meetings, field trips with early morning departures and early evening returns, and many projects which require after-hours work.

An effective time management system that works for you is a major aspect of stress management, especially during the internship. You are strongly advised to purchase or develop your own system and become proficient in its use well before you start the program. You'll soon find that effective time management is the key to a successful internship.

Speaking of getting organized, another "must do" item is the development of a filing system before you begin the program. You'll soon find that you are deluged with information during the program which you absolutely must organize so you can retrieve it efficiently. Again, you will have little time to do this once you start the program.

Since the whole idea of doing an internship is to obtain supervised practice in dietetics (i.e., performance), you're ahead of the game if you come with a good knowledge base. **Complete the clinical worksheets PRIOR to orientation.** Become well-versed in modified diets by reviewing your diet therapy texts. Be sure you know the diabetic exchanges and how to use them. Review lab values pertinent to nutrition, anthropometric measurement techniques, charting skills, and diet counseling procedures. Learn what you can about assessing nutrient requirements, especially protein and energy. Review your foodservice texts and notes from classes. Interns that typically have successful experiences are well prepared and open to learning from each experience.

Checklist of things to do BEFORE the internship begins

1. a. Send **DPD Verification Statement**, indicating completion of didactic program in

- dietetics to Internship Director.
- b. Have **final official undergraduate transcripts** sent to Internship Director. (Official transcripts include graduation date/degree listed)
 - c. If you have a master's degree have **final official graduate transcripts** sent to Internship Director. (Official transcripts include graduation date/degree listed)
 - d. If you are enrolled in a master's degree program, send **current unofficial transcripts and graduation audit that shows courses completed in your program and what you still need to complete for graduation** to the Internship Director.
 - d. Send **completed Certificate of Medical Examination, Immunization Records, Background check, drug screen** forms to Compliance Officer.
 - e. Complete the **Clinical and Medical Terminology Worksheets**.

At your convenience, we suggest you do the following:

1. Make arrangements for a place to live.
2. Obtain a reliable vehicle and obtain automobile insurance.
3. Obtain health insurance.
4. Purchase a white lab coat, and professional attire.
5. Obtain Membership in the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.
6. Review financial status and plan budget. Apply for a student loan if necessary and/or have college loans deferred.
7. Develop a time management system.
8. Develop a filing system for nutrition resources.

Code of Ethics

As an intern and future dietitian, please familiarize yourself with the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) and the Code of Ethics. When preparing to take the RD exam, all candidates will need to sign the Code of Ethics. Please refer to the statement below from CDR.

All candidates applying to take the registration examinations for dietitians or dietetic technicians must sign the following agreement when establishing eligibility to take the registration examination: "As a registered dietitian or dietetic technician, registered, I agree to abide by the Code of Ethics for the Profession of Dietetics (<https://www.cdrnet.org/codeofethics>) and to hold harmless the Commission on Dietetic Registration or other RDs, RDNs, DTRs and NDTRs, and CDR employees for their activities in enforcing them." The Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR), the credentialing agency for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (Academy), does not discriminate against any applicant because of race, creed, religion, color, sex, marital status, national origin, or ancestry.