

**Eastern Michigan University  
Distance-Online Coordinated Program in Dietetics**

**Directions for Securing Distance-Online Preceptors for First Year  
in the Coordinated Program in Dietetics**

**Applicants are responsible for locating, contacting, and securing all preceptors and corresponding sites.** In the event you have exhausted ALL possibilities and are still unsuccessful in securing preceptors, contact the Dietetics Clinical Coordinator for consultation by November 30<sup>th</sup>, prior to the January of application. The Clinical Coordinator is unavailable from December 1<sup>st</sup> - January 15<sup>th</sup>.

**DO NOT** assume you can locate all preceptors within close vicinity of your home. In fact, some of EMU on-campus students drive up to 2 hours one-way. Please review the **Terminology to Know** in the Online Application. In addition, as distance-online students, your sites for Supervised Practice Experience are referred to as **Remote Student-Identified Sites**. This simply means you are responsible for securing these sites 100 miles or more from our main campus.

You need 4 preceptors for your first year in the program. There are some facilities and/or preceptors that accommodate more than one of these experiences. For example, a medical center or large hospital may be able to provide DTC 331/531(Nutrition Therapy I) and DTC 351/551 (Food Systems I), although likely with a different preceptor working in those areas of the food and nutrition services department. They may even have an outpatient clinic and/or a long term care facility/unit or rehabilitation unit that could provide one or both DTC 371/571 (Nutrition Therapy II) Experiences.

Here is a brief summary of needed preceptors for the first year. Use this list to complete the **Preceptor Summary Form** template for your Application.

**First Fall:**

- 1 preceptor for DTC 331 or 531- Nutrition Therapy I (must be the same preceptor and remote student-identified site as Nutrition Therapy III)
- 1 preceptor for DTC 351 or 551- Food Systems Management I

**First Winter:**

- 2 preceptors for DTC 371 or 571-Nutrition Therapy II (1 for Long Term Care, 1 for Outpatient)

**Second Winter:**

- 1 preceptor for DTC 471 or 671 Nutrition Therapy III (must be same preceptor and remote student-identified site as Nutrition Therapy I) The remaining Second Year preceptors are arranged by you after admission to the program.

1. The **Online Preceptor Commitment Form** must be completed for each facility at which you secure an experience. If you have a preceptor who precepts you for multiple experiences they don't need to complete another form. Just add in all the applicable DTC 3-digit course numbers on that line.
2. If different preceptors are supervising each experience at the same facility, you still need an additional Online Preceptor Commitment Form for each person or lead person (such as a chief clinical dietitian). Incomplete forms will not be accepted.

**IMPORTANT: Applications that do not contain preceptor forms for all Supervised Practice Experiences noted above (with 3-digit EMU course code specified), will not be considered for admission.** This means, one form for DTC 331 or 531 and DTC 471 or 671, one for DTC 351 or 551 and two for DTC 371 or 571. Choose the correct course code for the degree you are applying for. 300 and 400 level numbers are for BS applicants. 500 and 600 level numbers are for MS applicants.

### **Helpful Information for Securing Preceptors and Remote Student-Identified Sites**

We are not an internship program, we are a coordinated program in dietetics and the preceptor experiences are correctly referred to as “Supervised Practice Experiences”, not internships. Your Supervised Practice Experiences are not shadowing, mentoring, preceptorships, or work studies and should never be referred to as such.

Preceptors must be Registered Dietitians and will need to include their six digit CDR (dietetic registration) number on the **Online Preceptor Commitment Form**. In Foodservice Systems Management Experiences (DTC 351/551), the qualified individual may be a Certified Dietary Manager (CDM), hold a related college degree or chef's training certificate. This person would be acceptable as a qualified preceptor. All preceptors for other Experiences must be Registered Dietitians.

To find potential preceptors, if you join the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics as a student member, you will have access to their website. The direct link to the “Registered Dietitian” page is: <http://www.eatright.org/programs/rdfinder/>. Be aware that not all Registered Dietitians will be listed in this database. You can also check online for a list of facilities where RDN's may work.

Join your district (local) dietetic association now. It is a great way to meet Registered Dietitians and begin the networking process that will benefit your future career. The most successful students do this early and find the process of obtaining preceptor commitments much easier.

Once you have a list of facilities, with addresses, phone numbers and contact persons, then set up appointments. Call each facility and ask to speak with the food/nutrition services director, if you only have a facility name to start with. Speak personally by phone first and determine whether that person and site is willing to consider having a student. Many RD's enjoy doing this and view it as an investment in the future of their profession.

Go to each appointment dressed professionally, with copies of the **Online Preceptor Commitment Form**, a copy of your resume and our **Preceptor Handbook (you can obtain 3 hard copies of this on request by emailing the Clinical Coordinator)**. Bring a positive attitude! Regardless of the outcome, thank each person for the meeting and follow-up with a thank-you note. Perhaps they would be willing to precept in your second year if you make a good impression.

When a preceptor agrees to provide the experience, leave them a copy of the **Preceptor Handbook**, and the **Online Preceptor Commitment Form**. Ask them to complete the form with the EMU course numbers designated and return it to you. They can scan and email the form to you. If potential preceptors have questions, please direct them to contact the EMU Dietetics Clinical Coordinator (contact information is on the cover of the Preceptor Handbook).

When selecting preceptors/sites, students are not to choose places where they have been or currently are employed. The learning experience may be compromised by the facility staff's perception of the student as an employee, not a student. Under no circumstances are students to be paid for any Supervised Practice Experience hours. Students are not to choose sites where friends and family are employed. This may interfere with the preceptor's ability to fairly assess student performance. If you are uncertain about this and have questions about your specific situation, contact the Clinical Coordinator.

## Supervised Practice Experience Descriptions

### FIRST YEAR-FALL

#### **First Fall Semester:**

#### **DTC 331/531 – Nutrition Therapy I Experience - 104 hours**

**Acute-care adult medical/surgical hospital/medical center – 11 eight-hour (88 hrs.) experiences at site + 16 hours simulation (online lessons provided by EMU instructor) = 104 hrs.**

Acute care involves short-term medical treatment, for patients having an acute illness or injury or recovering from surgery. The supervised practice experience is your opportunity to practice the skills you will learn, under the guidance of your preceptor. By the end of this first semester you will be able to complete basic patient nutrition assessments. The first 2 weeks of Fall semester consist of 16 hours of online lessons/simulation and an orientation provided by your EMU instructor. This experience is to be scheduled between the preceptor and student to begin in late September and completed by last day of classes (See EMU academic calendar). A pace of one day per week is preferred, to match the didactic lesson plans. Your instructor will provide specifics. **This experience is not to be arranged at a long-term care/nursing home site or children's hospital. Small community based and/or critical access hospitals with census/bed numbers below 75 do not offer enough patient variety.**

**Second Year Winter Semester DTC 471 or 671 must be arranged at the same site as DTC 331 or 531, and included in your preceptor forms to apply to the program. See description below.**

#### **DTC 351/551 – Foodservice Management - 208 hours (192 + 16 = 208)**

#### **Food Service facility – 24 eight-hour experiences (192 hours)**

The emphasis in this experience course is on the basic components of operating a non-commercial quantity food service facility. Appropriate choices; an acute care hospital or medical center, a long-term care facility (nursing home, skilled nursing facility/unit, assisted living, an inpatient rehabilitation center), school system, college/university dining service.

#### **Field Trips – 2 – 8 hour field trips (16 hours) Arrange after admission to the program**

Your preceptor can assist you in finding opportunities for field trips. They do not need to accompany you; however it is helpful to gain their insight by discussing what you saw.

**Select 2 field trip choices from this list;** Food distributors such as Gordon Food Service or Sysco, etc. and state restaurant associations hold vendor food shows for their customers to try and taste their products. Your DTC 351 preceptor most likely purchases the majority of their food, disposables, tabletop and small equipment from one major distributor and would know where their shows are held and if students are allowed. Other options include touring a food distribution center such as Sysco, FNCE sessions related to food systems, a state dietetics assoc. mtg., a local dietetics assoc. sponsored seminar/conference, touring a cook-chill or

central kitchen facility, a food manufacturer facility tour, touring a fresh produce processing/packaging plant/facility, touring a meat processing plant or touring a facility type different from where student is completing their DTC 351/551 Experience. Please check with your DTC 351/551 EMU Instructor if you are unsure about suitable field trip choices.

**Field trips must take place within the EMU Fall Semester dates, NOT prior to or after.**

## **FIRST YEAR-WINTER**

### **First Winter Semester:**

**DTC 371/571 – Nutrition Therapy II Experience - 208 hours total**

**Long Term Care Facility - 13 eight-hour experiences (104 hours)**

**Outpatient Facility - 13 eight-hour experiences (104 hours)**

It is best to complete one type of experience for the first half of the semester and then complete the other in the same manner. It does not matter whether outpatient or long-term care is scheduled first. Scheduling the experiences to take place approximately 2 days a week is recommended but can vary if needed.

- **Outpatient:** Preceptors working in outpatient diabetes and weight management will be effective in helping the student to achieve the competencies connected with the outpatient facility practice experience. Other opportunities may be found in cardiac rehabilitation, cancer treatment and other outpatient counseling services associated with hospitals/medical centers or doctor's office practices. Renal (kidney) dialysis centers are NOT ALLOWED, as this is advanced practice that a first-year student is not ready for.
- **Long Term Care:** Preceptors working in nursing homes (or long-term care communities that have skilled nursing facilities) would have the client base to help the student achieve the competencies. Some Registered Dietitians in private practice specialize in providing services to long term care facilities and may be a potential preceptor for this experience. An RD must be present at the facility to supervise the student. If the facility only has an RD as a part-time consultant, it would NOT be a suitable site.

**Preceptor Commitment Forms for Second Year Fall & Winter DTC 451/651 are due to the Dietetics Clinical Coordinator by February 15<sup>th</sup> of first year students are in the program.**

## **SECOND YEAR-FALL**

### **Second Fall Semester:**

**DTC 431/631 – Community Nutrition Experience - 236 hours** (Three preceptors needed PLUS three single day experiences)

#### **Three Preceptors Needed:**

1) **WIC – Women, Infant and Children Clinic (40 hours total)**

2) **Specialty Experience (104 hours total)**-The student selects the area of practice for the specialty experience, based on their interest in a particular area of the dietetics field. These areas include; eating disorders, sports nutrition, renal dialysis, long term care, acute care clinical, food systems, private practice/entrepreneur (adding additional time to the private practice experience – see below – within this semester to further skills in this area), grant funded programs for nutrition education in school systems, nutrition research, WIC (adding additional time to the WIC experience – see above - within this semester to further skills in this area)

### **3) Private Practice (64 hours total)**

**3-Single Day Experiences: Preceptor forms and affiliation agreements are NOT needed for:**

**Elementary School or Middle School or High School** – (one day - 8 hours)

**Senior Nutrition Center or Congregate Meal Site** – (one day - 8 hours)

**Health Fair** – (one day - 8 hours)

### **SECOND YEAR-WINTER**

#### **Second Winter Semester:**

#### **DTC 451/651 – Food Systems Management II Experience- 144 hours**

Food Service Facility (Must be a different site from first year DTC 351, we recommend a different type as well. Examples: school nutrition food service, university/college dining services, hospital or healthcare site, long term care facility, etc.) – 4.5 weeks @ 32 hours/wk. is the suggested schedule, which mirrors the on-campus program.

#### **DTC 471/671– Nutrition Therapy III Experience- 300 hours (12 hours online classroom “simulation” plus 288 hours at the site with your preceptor.)**

Acute Care Hospital (providing experiences in Enteral Feeding, Parenteral Nutrition, Renal, Liver, Intensive Care) - 9 weeks @ 32 hours/wk. is the suggested schedule, which mirrors our on-campus program. This experience is intensive. You will present an actual in-depth patient case study to your preceptor(s). Your First Fall semester DTC 331/531 experience site should provide a variety of patient types and acuity levels, so you can return for this final semester experience. Larger medical/surgical facilities are preferred. ***Please discuss any questions on choosing a site for DTC 331/531 & DTC 471/671 with the Dietetics Clinical Coordinator. Both experiences must take place at the same site.***

The Supervised Practice Experience hours for this last semester are demanding. In addition, you still have intensive didactic coursework. We recommend you plan for this semester carefully and have this program take first priority over jobs and other commitments. Ideally, if you can manage not having an outside job, it is best. You must fully focus to prepare yourself for passage of the RD exam after graduation and being ready to seek an entry-level position.

### **Supervised Practice Experience Hours for Distance-Online and On-Campus Programs by Content Area**

#### **Nutrition Therapy:**

DTC 331: 104 + DTC 371: 208 + DTC 471: 300 =

**Total: 612 hours**

#### **Community Nutrition:**

DTC 431: 236

**Total: 236 hours**

#### **Foodservice Systems Management:**

DTC 351: 208 + DTC 451: 144 =

**Total: 352 hours**

**Total Program Hours: 612+236+352 = 1200**