

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

Directions for Securing Distance-Online Preceptors and Sites

Terminology:

Preceptor: The Registered Dietitian Nutritionist or Food Service Professional who agrees to provide a Supervised Practice Experience at their work site and assures you will have the opportunity to accomplish all learning experiences.

Supervised Practice Experience: The actual hours you spend at a site with your preceptor for each experience course, working on the required competencies for each. There is a specific number of minimum hours for each Experience course, found in the Learning Outcome Tool (LOT) student evaluation form.

Supervised Practice Experience Site: The physical site you will be at with your preceptor, when completing the required hours for each experience. For distance-online students, your sites for Supervised Practice Experience are also referred to as **Remote Student Identified Sites**. This simply means you are responsible for securing these sites approximately 100 miles or more from our Ypsilanti main campus.

Applicants are responsible for locating, contacting, and securing all preceptors and corresponding sites. For guidance, contact the Dietetics Clinical Coordinator for consultation by November 30th, before the January of application. The Clinical Coordinator is unavailable from December 1- January 15. **DO NOT** assume you can locate all preceptors within close vicinity of your home. Some of our on-campus students drive up to 2 hours one-way.

You need 4 preceptors for your first-year. Some facilities or preceptors may accommodate more than one of these experiences. For example, a medical center or community 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/nutrition services department. They may have an Outpatient clinic and/or a Long Term Care facility/skilled nursing or rehabilitation unit that could provide one or both DTC 371/571 (Nutrition Therapy II) Experiences.

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

First Fall:

- 1 preceptor for DTC 331L4 or 531- Nutrition Therapy I Experience (in most cases it must be the same preceptor and remote student-identified site as Nutrition Therapy III)
- 1 preceptor for DTC 351 or 551- Foodservice Systems Management I Experience

First Winter:

- 2 preceptors for DTC 371L2 or 571-Nutrition Therapy II Experience (1 for Long Term Care, 1 for Outpatient)

Second Winter:

- 1 preceptor for DTC 471L4 or 671 Nutrition Therapy III Experience (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 (Second Fall and Second Winter Foodservice Systems II).

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 all the applicable DTC 3-digit course numbers to that line in the form.
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 Clinical Nutrition Manager). 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 DTC course codes), will not be considered for admission. This means, 1 form for DTC 331 or 531 and DTC 471 or 671, 1 for DTC 351 or 551 and 2 for DTC 371 or 571. Choose the course code for the degree you are applying for, 300/400 level numbers for BS, 500/600 level numbers 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. 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. All Supervised Practice Experiences are to be unpaid.

Most Preceptors must be Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs) 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, food safety, or chef's training certificate. This person would be a qualified preceptor. All preceptors for the other Experiences must be Registered Dietitian Nutritionists.

To find potential preceptors, join the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND) as a student member. Then you will have access to their website (<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 RDNs may work.

Join your district (local) dietetic association now. It is a great way to meet Registered Dietitian Nutritionists 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. If you join AND as a student member, you can access their Find-a-Preceptor Database at <https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend/training-and-volunteer-opportunities/preceptors-and-mentors> and follow the prompts/information on that page.

Once you have a list of facilities, with addresses, phone numbers, and contact persons, set up appointments. If you only have a facility name to start with, call each facility and ask to speak with the food/nutrition services director. First, speak by phone to determine whether that person and site is willing to consider having a student. Many RDNs 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 4 hard copies of this by emailing the Clinical Coordinator or access it at our website for electronic viewing)**. 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 (you can fill them in first if they agree) and return it to you. They can scan and email the form back 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 or family are employed. This may interfere with the preceptor's ability to assess student performance fairly. If you have questions about your specific situation, contact the Clinical Coordinator.

Supervised Practice Experience Descriptions

First Fall Semester:

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

Acute-care adult medical/surgical hospital/medical center or sub-acute rehabilitation center – 11 eight-hour (88 hours) experiences at site + 16 hours simulation (online lessons provided by EMU instructor) = 104 hours. *This experience is to be scheduled between the preceptor and student to begin in late September (in the first two weeks your SPE course instructor covers critical material and simulation to prepare you) and completed by last day of classes. See EMU academic calendar for Fall 2020 – start the week of September 14th and complete on or before December 13th. A pace of 1 day per week is preferred, to match didactic lesson plans.*

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 two weeks of the Fall semester consist of 16 hours of online lessons/simulation and orientation provided by your EMU instructor. **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.**

*Here is a description to share with potential preceptors, in determining if the site is appropriate for Nutrition Therapy I and III Experiences: **Sites that offer a variety of exposure to various medical/surgical patients are good choices, preferably with a range of adult ages represented. Students should specifically have exposure to these areas: Chronic Kidney Disease, Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus, Obesity, Cardiovascular Disease, Gastrointestinal Disorders, and Malnutrition. It is also useful for the student to be able to practice in the area of nutrition support with tube feedings and (if possible) TPN.***

Second Winter Semester DTC 471 or 671 should 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)

This experience is to be scheduled between the preceptor and student to begin on or after the 4th day of September classes start (to allow for orientation to the program and with your SPE course instructor) and completed by last day of classes. See EMU academic calendar for Fall 2020 – start on or after September 4th and complete on or before December 13th. A pace of 2 days per week is suggested but may vary according to site preference.

The emphasis in this experience course is 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, inpatient rehabilitation center), public or private K-12 school system, college/university dining service.

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

Preceptors can assist you in finding field trip opportunities. They do not need to accompany you; however, it is helpful to gain their insight by discussing what you saw. **Select two field trip choices from this list:** Food distributors and state restaurant associations hold vendor food shows for their customers to try and taste their products. Your preceptor most likely purchases the majority of their food, disposables, tabletop and small equipment from one major distributor, would know where their shows are held and if students are welcome. 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 manufacturing facility tour, touring a fresh produce processing/packaging plant/facility, touring a meat processing plant or touring a facility type different from you are completing the DTC 351/551 Experience. Check with your DTC 351/551 EMU Instructor if unsure about field trip choices. **Field trips must take place within EMU Fall Semester dates, NOT before or after.**

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 in the first half of the semester and complete the other in the second half. It does not matter whether Outpatient or Long-Term Care is scheduled first. *This experience is to be scheduled between the preceptors and student to begin on or after the 3rd day of January classes start (to allow for orientation with your SPE course instructor) and completed by last day of classes. See EMU academic calendar for Winter 2021 – start on or after January 8th and complete on or before April 20th. A pace of two days per week is suggested but may vary according to site preference.*

- **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 a first-year student is not prepared for.

- **Long Term Care:** Preceptors at nursing homes, rehabilitation centers (or long-term care communities that have skilled nursing facilities) have the client base needed to help the student achieve the competencies. Some Registered Dietitian Nutritionists in private practice specialize in providing services to long term care facilities and may be a potential preceptor. An RDN must be present at the facility to supervise the student. If the facility only has an RDN as a part-time consultant, it would not a good choice.

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

Second Fall Semester:

DTC 431/631 – Community Nutrition Experience - 236 hours (3 preceptors needed **PLUS** 3 single day experiences.) *These experiences are to be scheduled between the preceptors and student to begin on or after the 4th day of September classes start (to allow for orientation with your SPE course instructor and program update) and completed by last day of classes on the EMU academic calendar.*

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 based on their interest in a particular area of the dietetics field. These areas may 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 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 within this semester to further skills in this area), functional medicine, corporate or community wellness programs,
- 3) **Private Practice (64 hours total)**

Three-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 Winter Semester:

Both experiences below are to be scheduled between the preceptors and student to begin on or after the 3rd day of January classes start (to allow for orientation with your SPE course instructors) and completed by last day of classes on the EMU academic calendar.

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

Food Service Facility (Ideally this should 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.) Plan for 4.5 weeks @ 32 hours/week (18 days) as the suggested schedule.

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 or Sub-Acute Rehabilitation (providing experiences in Enteral Feeding, Parenteral Nutrition, Renal, Liver, Intensive Care) - nine weeks @ 32 hours/wk., is the suggested schedule. 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 hospitals or sub-acute rehabilitation facilities are preferred. ***Please discuss questions on choosing a site for DTC 331/531 & DTC 471/671 with the Dietetics Clinical Coordinator. Both experiences should take place at the same site, but there may be exceptions based on availability.***

The Supervised Practice Experience hours for this last semester are demanding and include intensive didactic coursework. We recommend you plan for this semester carefully and have this program take priority over jobs and other commitments. If you can manage not having an outside job, it is best. You will be preparing for passing the RDN exam after graduation and becoming confident 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