

Dear Prospective Preceptor:

Iowa State University (ISU) offers an accredited dietetic internship (DI) with four locations: Iowa-Based, Iowa-Based International, Nationwide, and Nationwide International. Iowa-Based is completed at selected locations throughout the State of Iowa (and just across its borders), Nationwide is completed in the intern's "home" location, and the International selections are completed in the U.S. and Ghana, West Africa. All of the program materials are located on the ISU Dietetics Internship website: <http://www.dietetics.iastate.edu/>.

The ISU Dietetics Internship is a 25 week program, accredited under the 2017 Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND), meeting requirements of a minimum of 1200 hours supervised practice experiences. There are two internship classes each year; each class has approximately 80 interns of which 60 - 65 are in the two Nationwide locations. Class one begins in early January and ends in late June. Class two begins in early June and ends in late November.

Because the interns in all locations are geographically distant from the ISU campus, Blackboard Learn is utilized to provide on-line support for the internship. Interns are required to have internet access for the entire program. Blackboard Learn provides communication tools (e-mail, bulletin board, etc.) and supplemental educational information that is divided into learning rotations for Community Nutrition, Food Service Management, and Medical Nutrition Therapy. Each overall rotation then contains information about different topics pertinent to the content area.

In addition to the supplemental Blackboard Learn readings, the interns have a list of assignments and experiences that they are expected to complete during their internship. These are designed to ensure that the intern meets the different entry-level competencies put forth by ACEND. The intern also is required to complete patient case studies, literature reviews, other assorted projects, as well as application exams – all of which are used as assessment tools. Review and evaluation of these components of the intern's work is the responsibility of the ISU program faculty. ISU DI hosts a required "Pre-MNT Workshop" the first week of the internship where didactic learning is planned for interns to practice skills and develop the foundation to successfully complete supervised practice experiences. For example, there is a communication workshop, practice enteral and parenteral calculation skills, practice critical thinking skills, and discuss professionalism and time management in order to prepare interns for their rotations.

You, as the preceptor, are asked to:

- provide the supervised practice experience opportunities for the intern;
- allow the intern to shadow and observe you; then—
- supervise the intern as s/he performs as much of your duties as possible;
- co-sign the intern's notes and recommendations; and
- complete various evaluation forms on the intern's work and professional behavior.
- Also, we require that the intern and preceptor complete a weekly "log" that proves the number of hours the intern has completed that week.

The ISU faculty member assigned to the intern is available to talk with the intern and preceptors via conference call or "virtual meetings". This is an opportunity to meet the preceptors and to answer questions (from both the intern and the preceptors) as well as a method for the instructor to evaluate and assess the intern's skill/knowledge development.

Please note – All reasonable attempts are made to screen for those individuals who will be self-starters, leaders, self-directed learners. This program is not for the intern who needs close supervision from faculty and preceptors. While it may seem a bit "unfair" that the applicant must complete a great deal of pre-planning with the risk of not getting into the program, this is a crucial step because plans must be in place at the beginning of the program.

Please be assured that:

- Professional liability insurance is maintained on our students.
- The intern is required to carry his/her own health insurance.
- The intern must provide a completed health/medical examination form, which includes immunization records and proof of TB testing.
- The intern is required to be certified in HIPAA, CPR, First Aid, and Universal Precautions (Bloodborne Pathogens) and proof of training is maintained in the intern's permanent record.
- The ISU DI hires an accredited agency to conduct criminal and abuse background checks for incoming ISU interns. The results of the checks will be maintained in the intern's placement file; of course, if anything questionable is found, appropriate preceptors will be informed and necessary steps taken.
- The intern will have specific assignments and project goals and objectives that s/he is to complete throughout the internship. S/He will provide these to you upon request. Information about the ISU DI may be found on our website: <http://www.dietetics.iastate.edu>

Written affiliation agreements are required between the intern's supervised practice facilities and ISU DI. A reasonable effort is made to execute signed written affiliation agreements for all locations especially those where the intern is in place more than 40 hours and/or where the intern is involved with direct patient care and related tasks. When the intern is completing a shadow/observation-only experience, written affiliation agreements are encouraged but not required. In the event no agreement is entered into by the parties, each party in the shadow/observation-only experience will be responsible for the liabilities arising out of their own conduct and the conduct of their officers, employees and agents. Affiliation agreements will be completed between Iowa State University legal counsel and the practice site/facility after the intern has been matched to the program. Occasionally some facilities prefer to use their own version of an agreement, in that case the legal counsel of ISU and the facility will work together to reach agreement if possible.

Please do not hesitate to contact our program if you have any questions or concerns. The best method is an email to diisu@iastate.edu where your message will be forwarded to the appropriate person. Thank you for assisting this prospective intern. Your commitment to the education of future dietetics professionals is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Dietetic Internship Program
Iowa State University