

**Report to the NIU Assessment Panel
B.S. in Nutrition, Dietetics, and Hospitality Administration
School of Family, Consumer, and Nutrition Sciences
College of Health and Human Sciences**

I. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The B.S. in Nutrition, Dietetics, and Hospitality Administration (NDHA) is a professionally oriented major with a strong emphasis on preparation of graduates for relevant positions. This professional orientation does not, however, obscure a commitment to providing each student with a strong and well-rounded education that will serve them in the various aspects of their lives beyond their careers. The objectives of the program are that graduates will be able to:

1. Apply basic concepts of physical and behavioral sciences to nutrition care and hospitality operations.
2. Collect, analyze, and interpret quantitative data utilizing current technology.
3. Utilize effective oral and written communication skills, using current technology where appropriate.
4. Develop values and habits compatible with ethical and effective professional practices.
5. Demonstrate possession of perspectives and specific skills in nutritional care and/or hospitality operations, education, and management to enter a dietetics internship or function effectively in an entry-level position in hospitality administration.

2. EXPLANATION OF METHODS

The following chart shows how each objective will be assessed, including the assessment method, timeline, and persons responsible.

Explanation of Methods

Method	Timeline	Person responsible	Objective addressed
Senior Portfolios will include a collection of major projects produced by each student during their professional classes. Students will get feedback from their advisor and one other faculty member. Every three years a 10% sample will be taken to the NDHA Advisory Committee for evaluation.	Yearly & Every three years	Advisor & one other faculty member NDHA Advisory Committee.	2,3,5
Graduating Senior Surveys will be used to assess students' own perceptions of their achievement in relationship to competencies developed in the professions of dietetics and	Yearly	NDHA assessment chair.	4,5

Method	Timeline	Person responsible	Objective addressed
hospitality administration.			
Exit Interviews will be conducted with a random 20% sample of graduating seniors and will explore satisfactions and dissatisfactions with the program.	Yearly	Faculty members not teaching seniors.	4,5
Success in internships (hospitality internships are part of BS; dietetics internships are post-baccalaureate and external ¹) will be assessed by determining the percentage of applicants being selected, the completion rate for internships, and feedback from preceptors and internship directors using a brief survey.	Yearly	DPD Director & Coordinator of Hospitality Internships	5
Pass rate on the Dietetics Registration Examination (Nutrition & Dietetics emphasis only) Although graduates can not sit for this examination until they have completed an external dietetics internship, we are held accountable for their success on the examination. Data is provided the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR).	Yearly	DPD Director	5
Alumni surveys conducted annually by the School of Family, Consumer, and Nutrition Sciences and the NIU Assessment Office (One year-out surveys) explore general satisfaction with the University and the program. The survey made every 5 years by the program will explore achievement of competencies specific to each emphasis and will query employment and further education.	Annually Every five years.	NDHA Assessment Chair.	All, especially 5
Employer surveys are conducted by the program every five years. The instrument is included in the program's Alumni Survey and respondents are asked to pass it along to their employer or supervisor.	Every five years.	NDHA Assessment Chair	All, especially 5
CADE accreditation , focused only on the Nutrition & Dietetics emphasis, involves an extensive self-study and a site visit.	Every ten years or less	DPD Director	All

¹ For programs like the major in NDHA, dietetics internships follow the completion of the B.S. and are entirely separate for the baccalaureate program. Although NIU offers a dietetic internship, most students diversify their experience by applying elsewhere. Acceptance to internships is highly competitive and, within the profession, the proportion of applying graduates accepted is considered a strong measure of the strength of the program.

Objective	Portfolio	Senior Survey	Exit Interview	Internship Performance	RD Exam	Alumni Surveys	Employer Surveys	CADE Accreditation
Application of basic concepts					X		X	X
Handle quantitative data	X						X	X
Communication	X						X	X
Professionalism	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Employability	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

3. AVAILABLE DATA

This program initiated collection of assessment data prior to the last Program Review. Our assessment strategies have evolved somewhat over that period. We are now four years from our next Program Review.

a. Senior portfolios

i. Last year's activities: faculty members began the process of identifying products from their classes that would be suitable for inclusion in portfolios. Joan Quinn participated in the portfolio development workshop last summer. The faculty began to identify the issues that must be addressed before this assessment project can be fully implemented.

ii. Findings: none to date.

b. Graduating Senior Surveys

i. Last several years' activities: surveys were administered in classes to all graduating seniors.

ii. Findings: the surveys list professional competencies for nutrition & dietetics majors. Seniors indicated that they felt they had achieved all 32 competencies at least at an "average" level (mid-point on a five point scale). For 26 competencies the modal achievement level was 2.5 (1 being the highest score possible). The faculty has considered the individual competencies, identifying those needed improvement. The survey also asks that students rate the importance of each competency to their anticipated career. Students tended to value those competencies that they felt they had mastered. Jo Umoren presented a poster on this association at the Annual

Meeting of the American Dietetic Association in 1999. The survey needs to be modified for students in the new hospitality emphasis.

c. Exit interviews

- i. Last several years' activities: annually two faculty members interviewed a sample of graduating seniors.
- ii. Findings: The findings were qualitative and varied from student to student. When asked about the strengths of the program, students named a number of different courses and each student was able to identify at least one faculty member to whom he/she felt particularly connected. There was frustration among nutrition and dietetics students who did not have a high enough GPA to be accepted into a dietetic internship; these students seemed to be at a loss career-wise.

d. Internship performance

- i. Last year's activities: data were collected in regard to the numbers of students applying for, being accepted into, and completing internships. Supervisor satisfaction was monitored for the foodservice (now hospitality) internship. Feedback from directors of dietetic internships was not sought in any organized manner.
- ii. Findings: all students in the food systems administration emphasis were accepted for and completed internships. Employers expressed high levels of satisfaction and extended offers of employment in many cases. Dietetic internships follow the baccalaureate and are more competitive. Of the students who applied for dietetic internships 83% were accepted, a rate considerably higher than the national average of 67%. Those who entered dietetic internships are still enrolled at this time. A source of concern is the fact that only about a fourth of the senior class applied for internships. Some of those not applying made a rational decision based on the fact that their GPAs were not competitive. Others could not afford another non-earning year.

e. Pass rate on the RD examination

- i. Last three years' activities: annually the Commission on Dietetic Registration provides data on the program's graduates on the Registration Examination for Dietitians. These graduates have completed a dietetic internship since graduation from the B.S. program.
- ii. Findings: The average pass rate on the CDR examination over the last three-years was 97.3%. This exceeds the national average of 79%.

f. Alumni surveys

- i. Last year's activities: in summer of 2001 all program graduates for five years, 1996-2000, were surveyed regarding the effectiveness of the program in assisting them in developing professional competencies.
- ii. Findings: although the response rate was poor, those responding reported satisfaction with the program. All those who wished to be employed were employed or were in internships or graduate school.

g. Employer surveys

- i. Last year's activities: in the alumni surveys a survey for employers was included. Alumni were asked to request that their employer/supervisors complete and return these surveys.
- ii. Findings: all the responding employers indicated that our graduates were as qualified as or better qualified than graduates of similar programs. All would hire another graduate of the program.

h. CADE accreditation

- i. This year's activity: the self study for the Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD)(the Nutrition & Dietetics emphasis) was submitted to CADE in March 2002. The site visit was held in April 2002. The program received accreditation for 10 years, the maximum that is granted.
- ii. Findings: the self study demonstrated that the program had met all of its measurable goals with the exception of the goal that 75% of majors would graduate within 4-6 semesters from their admission at the beginning of their junior years. Of the students admitted between fall 1997 and spring 2001, 67% completed the major in 4-6 semesters. The 17% who stopped or dropped out includes postgraduate students who were returning to complete the DPD but did not earn a second baccalaureate degree. The remainder completed the program in more than 6 semesters.

4. USE OF RESULTS

The attached flow chart indicates the processes used in the School of Family, Consumer, and Nutrition Sciences to plan assessment, generate data, and utilize the information in improving our programs. We have used the results of our various assessments efforts to modify our curriculum and program policies. Feedback from alumni indicated that a hospitality emphasis would have enhanced their career options. We proposed and secured approval for such an emphasis in 2000-01. Classroom tests and examinations as well as course projects indicated that our students came to us with a relatively high level of computer competency. Several courses were teaching students how to use specialized software. This data indicated that a separate course on computer applications was no longer needed; we eliminated the course. On the other hand, senior and alumni surveys indicated a shortage of hands-on experiences in nutrition. Two years ago we added weekly "Applications Sessions" to two of our junior-level nutrition classes. These sessions add an hour a week to each class and provide an opportunity to do simple experiments and nutritional assessments. Feedback from alumni and employers indicated that graduates were increasingly working in community programs outside of acute care institutions so we made a course in community nutrition required and added an elective practicum in community nutrition.

5. GAPS IN CURRENT DATA

We have the following gaps in our current data:

- Minimal assessment tools or data for the new hospitality emphasis.
- Portfolio quality—neither the policies for guiding students in portfolio compilation nor the process for periodic evaluation has been developed.
- Little information about barriers to internship application.
- No means for formal data collection related to graduates' performance in dietetic internships.

6. TIMELINES FOR COLLECTING ADDITIONAL DATA

a. Senior portfolios

1. Next year we intend to develop our policies and resources for this project. Joan Quinn received further training and funding to assist in this preparation.
2. In 2003-4 we anticipate being ready to require every student to produce an electronic portfolio. We will begin accumulate random samples for assessment.
3. In 2004-5, although our sample will be small, we will start using our NDHA Advisory Committee as an evaluation panel.

c. Graduating Senior Surveys

Next year we will develop a version of this survey more suitable for hospitality majors.

d. Exit interviews

We will continue these annual surveys

e. Internship performance

- All years: We will continue to accumulate data about application and acceptance rates, as well as supervisors' satisfaction in the case of the hospitality majors.
- Next year: Among dietetics majors we will develop a means to document the barriers to internship application.
- Next year: We will develop a brief survey to send directors of dietetic internships completed by our graduates.

f. Pass rate on the RD examination

We will continue to accumulate the data provided by the Commission on Dietetic Registration and to compare it to the national pass rates.

f. Alumni surveys

In the year preceding our next Program Review we will revise our surveys, incorporating the latest dietetics competencies and developing version suitable for graduates of the hospitality emphasis. We will use these surveys to poll all graduates since 2000.

g. Employer surveys

In the year preceding our next Program Review we will revise this survey in a manner parallel to the alumni survey and use it to collect data from employers/supervisors of our graduates.

h. CADE accreditation

We will learn the outcome of our application for accreditation before the end of 2002. There may be requests for further information or curricular changes. We will continue to collect the data required in annual reports (primarily enrollment data) and five-year reports (more extensive self-evaluation). All the assessment methods described above will contribute to this report.

7. RESOURCES NEEDED

Mounting the portfolio assessment will be a major undertaking. The support currently applied for by Joan Quinn will be a make/break factor in being able to adhere to the timelines above in implementing this assessment.

The School of FCNS is requesting summer support in Year 3 to provide stipends to faculty members involved in revising survey instruments, as well as collecting and interpreting the data. Current poor response rates indicate that this funding must include monies for inducements for response. We have had good success with drawings for a few substantial rewards.

Ellen Parham 22 March 2005.