

**Gulf Coast Dietetic Internship (GCDI)  
Intern Handbook**



## **Table of Contents**

1. Introduction to the Program
2. Program Mission
3. Measurable Goals of the Program
4. Statement of Equal Opportunity
5. Protection of Privacy of Information
6. Access to Student Support Services
7. Professional Membership and activities
8. Program-Associated Costs
9. Withdrawal and Refund of Tuition and Fees
10. Scheduling and Program Calendar
11. Paperwork and Assignments
12. Minimum Wage Ruling
13. Intern Compensation
14. Insurance
15. Injury or Illness while in a Facility for Supervised Practice
16. Immunizations
17. Drug screens and background checks
18. Personal Appearance
19. Confidentiality of Medical Records
20. Medical Leave of Absence
21. Non - completion of Internship
22. Protocols and Grievances
23. Verification Statements
24. Site Selection
25. Assessment of prior learning
26. Discipline and Termination
27. Financial Aid
28. Evaluations
29. Finding Sites and Preceptors
30. Student Signature Page of Receipt of the Handbook

## **1. Introduction to the Program**

The Gulf Coast Dietetic Internship program is a post-baccalaureate, supervised practice program that qualifies graduates to take the examination to become Registered Dietitians. Dietetic Interns (from now on referred to as "interns") enroll in a full-time program requiring a minimum of 40 hours per week for 24 weeks, plus 1 week for orientation, for a total of 25 weeks in the internship. The program goals reflect the major points of our philosophy: quality instruction with broad-based training concurrent with ongoing supervision, feedback, and evaluation.

The Gulf Coast Internship program has been granted accreditation by the:  
Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND)  
120 Riverside Plaza Suite 2190  
Chicago, IL 60606-6995  
1-800-877-1600 ext 5400

The program is comprised of a one week orientation, 10 weeks of clinical nutrition, 6 weeks of foodservice management, 5 weeks of community nutrition, and 3 weeks of an elective rotation. It is strongly suggested the elective rotation be of an entrepreneurial nature. Each rotation contains a series of competencies, objectives, activities, and assignments that must be completed in order to receive credit for the hours completed. Formal evaluations will be received by each intern at the end of each rotation, and will indicate whether or not the intern has successfully completed the competencies and objectives for that particular rotation. All interns will complete at least 1000 supervised practice hours during the 25 week period. Interns are required to submit journals at the end of each week that tracks progression through the rotations. Intern progress will be evaluated by the program director/coordinator(s) following each rotation and there will be a formal evaluation between the intern and director/coordinators at the end of the program. At the successful completion of all program requirements, interns are eligible for a verification statement and will be eligible to sit for the Registration examination for dietitians, administered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR). Interns should contact the state affiliate of AND for information regarding licensure in their respective states. Interns will present photo identification at orientation. Photo identification will also be required to sit for the RD examination.

Following the successful passage of the registration exam, students will be able to practice as Registered Dietitians Nutritionists.

## **2. Program Mission**

The mission of Gulf Coast Dietetic Internship is to prepare entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists in an entrepreneurial setting for emerging roles in dietetics practice.

## **3. Measurable Goals of the Program**

The primary goals of the Gulf Coast Dietetic Internship are twofold: to provide the intern with meaningful rotational experiences that will allow for successful completion of the registration examination for dietitians, and to provide the opportunity to develop the skills needed to obtain employment as an entry-level dietitian nutritionist.

**Goal 1:** The program will prepare graduates to be competent for entry-level practice as a registered dietitian through high-quality, innovative educational offerings.

### **Outcome measures:**

1.1 Of graduates who seek employment, 80 percent are employed in nutrition and dietetics or related fields within 12 months of graduation.

1.2 At least 80% of program interns complete program/degree requirements within 12months (150% of the program length)

1.3 Eighty percent of program graduates take the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists within 12 months of program completion.

1.4 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%

1.5 At least 80% of graduates will indicate the program helped them to develop professionally.

**Goal 2:** The program will produce well prepared registered dietitians who obtain employment in emerging, dietetics-related positions in the Gulf Coast region and beyond.

**Outcome measures:**

2.1 Within one year of program completion, at least twenty-five percent of graduates will be employed in an emerging, dietetics related position.

2.2 Eighty percent of employers will rate graduates as “3” or greater on a five point Likert scale as being entry-level prepared

#### **4. Statement of Equal Opportunity**

The Gulf Coast Dietetic Internship is fully committed to the principle of providing equality of treatment and opportunity to all persons in an environment which appreciates and respects the diversity of the community it serves, prohibits discrimination in educational services based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation, except where such a distinction is required by law.

#### **5. Protection of Privacy of Information**

Interns are accorded privacy regarding anything of a personal nature, either written or stated, by the program director/coordinators, staff, and site preceptors. Intern files are accessible only by the intern, in addition to personnel associated with the program. Since this is a distance internship, the student records will be maintained in Biloxi, Mississippi and available only through contact

with the program director, Gina Wack at [ginawack@aol.com](mailto:ginawack@aol.com).

## **6. Access to Support Services**

Gulf Coast Dietetic Internship is a non-academic program and as such, interns are not eligible for student support services. Services will vary according to facility offerings. Interns are responsible for expenses caused by any illness or injury (self-inflicted or not) that occur during duty hours at an affiliated facility. Interns must have health and liability insurance.

## **7. Professional Membership and activities**

Interns must join a professional organization. Interns will be provided with a listing of acceptable organizations. Interns are expected to utilize the services of the professional organization.

## **8. Program-Associated Costs**

Fees are \$8500.00 and payment is required prior to the beginning of orientation. The dates for the fee schedule are listed in the intern contract. The internship director must approve any variance in the payment schedule.

Interns are responsible for their own transportation to the Mississippi Gulf Coast for orientation/pre-rotation and internship facilities in their home site. Interns are required to travel to Mississippi for a one-week orientation session.

Interns are required to have reliable transportation for the duration of the internship. Nutrition Services and Solutions, LLC is not liable for any intern travel resulting in accidents, injury, or mortality. For this reason, we require that interns provide proof of car insurance and medical insurance before starting at their respective sites. Transportation and parking costs are dependent upon the sites selected by the intern.

Some sites provide meals as part of the rotation experience; others do not. Lab

coats are required for the program. It is recommended that each intern have at least two lab coats to ensure availability at all times.

Reference books will be recommended. Interns are encouraged to utilize reference materials from their DPD program.

Interns are required to have daily access to a computer and printer for timely completion of assignments and projects and must maintain an active email account. Interns will be required to bring a lap top computer to the orientation prior to beginning their rotations.

Fees/cost for the students are estimated as follows:

Application Fee	\$50.00
Lab Coat	\$30.00- 60.00
Health Insurance	varies (\$200 - \$600 per month, usually under parents)
Automobile insurance	varies (\$150 - \$600 per six months)
Tuition fee	\$8500.00
Professional liability insurance	\$20.00
DICAS	\$50.00
D&D	\$50.00
Professional Membership	\$50.00
Drug Screen	\$25.00-50.00
Books	\$250.00
Background Check	\$75.00
Registration Exam Fee	\$200.00
Orientation Trip to MS	\$1000.00

## **9. Withdrawal and Refund of Tuition and Fees**

Program fee payment is due in full prior to the start of orientation. Fees are non-refundable regardless of the reason for non-completion of the program.

## **10. Scheduling and Program Calendar**

Regular attendance and punctuality at each site are mandatory. Being tardy during a rotation may result in failing the rotation. All failed rotations must be repeated in order to receive credit for supervised practice hours. Reassignment for failed rotations is at the discretion of the Internship Director and sponsoring preceptor. To pass a rotation, you must have received an evaluation of “3” or higher on that rotation’s competencies and a satisfactory evaluation by the preceptor. Interns may fail a rotation due to unethical or unprofessional behavior regardless of successful completion of required competencies. Failure of two (2.0) rotations during the 30-week program constitutes grounds for dismissal from the program. Life crises such as death, bereavement, illness, accidents, and other emergencies may result in the intern having to take an approved leave of absence from the program. **IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT INTERNS CALL THEIR SITES AND CALL THE COORDINATOR WHEN THEY WILL BE LATE OR ABSENT FOR ANY REASON.**

Interns document supervised practice hours on the assignment website. This document is approved by the preceptor at the conclusion of the rotation.

Personal leave for other than medical, bereavement, or emergency reasons is **NOT ALLOWED**. If you know you are going to need time off for any reason, please let the Internship Director know as soon as possible.

There is no vacation allowance during the Gulf Coast Dietetic Internship. Interns will be required to make up hours missed due to absences. Interns will observe holiday schedules of the practice sites. Schedule changes for religious reasons can be made if discussed in advance with the Internship Director and preceptor. **IT IS THE INTERN’S RESPONSIBILITY TO NOTIFY THE DIRECTOR OF ANY TIME AWAY**



FROM FACILITIES. FAILURE TO NOTIFY THE DIRECTOR IN A TIMELY FASHION MAY RESULT IN TERMINATION.

**Sample Schedule  
Gulf Coast Dietetic Internship**

**Distance Internship Rotation Schedule Summary (please fill in as completely as possible) FSM-8 WEEKS TOTAL, COMMUNITY- 7 WEEKS TOTAL, CLINICAL- 11 WEEKS TOTAL ENTREPRENEUR ELECTIVE 4 WEEKS**

**(Preferable rotation order is: FSM, Community, Clinical, Entrepreneur.)**

**Name of Intern: \_\_\_\_\_**

DATE ROTATION WILL TAKE PLACE & NUMBER OF WEEKS	LOCATION	PRECEPTOR SUPERVISING & CONTACT INFORMATION	ROTATION & EXPERIENCE OBTAINED
January 21 – 23, 2020	<b>Orientatio n*</b>	<b>Gina Wack 228-297-8446</b>	<b>Program Orientation</b>
March 2 – April 24 6 weeks	<b>FSM</b>	<b>Preceptor</b> _____ _____ _____	<b>FSM- Food service management</b> <i>Hospital, school food service, LTC</i>

<p>April 27 – June 12</p> <p>5 weeks</p>	<p><b>Community</b></p> <p><b>WIC</b></p>	<p><b>Phone</b> _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>Email</b> _____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Orientation, Management principles, budgeting, ordering, inventory, menu development, human resource management, food service production</p> <p><b>Community Nutrition</b></p>
<p>June 15 – August 14</p> <p>10 weeks</p>	<p><b>MNT University Medical Center</b></p>	<p><b>Preceptor</b> _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>Phone</b> _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>Email</b> _____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Assessing needs of the population, creating community education programs, budgeting, management, program development and assessment</p> <p><b>MNT 1 – Clinical Nutrition</b></p>
<p>August 17 – September 4</p> <p>3 weeks</p>	<p><b>Elective rotation</b></p>	<p><b>Preceptor</b> _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>Phone</b> _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>Email</b> _____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p><i>Cardiac, GI, Long-term Care, DM, wt mgt, Ca</i></p> <p>Orientation, interview, screen &amp; monitor patients, nutrition assessment &amp; intervention, charting &amp; medical records, individualized pt menu, pt counseling, apply nutrition care plan, research, case studies for common disease states, PES statements.</p> <p><b>MNT 2 – Clinical Nutrition</b></p>
<p>August 17 – September 4</p> <p>3 weeks</p>	<p><b>Elective rotation</b></p>	<p><b>Preceptor</b> _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>Phone</b> _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>Email</b> _____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p><i>Neurology/Rehabilitation and Nutrition Support TPN, PN, EN, Pediatrics.</i></p>

<p><b>TOTAL =</b></p> <p><b>25 weeks</b></p>		<p>Preceptor _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Phone _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Email _____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>As above.</p> <p><b>Elective</b></p> <p><b>Rotation competencies and activities TBD by program director in collaboration with preceptor and intern</b></p>
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**\*Orientation is the responsibility of the intern. Orientation begins on Tuesday morning and goes until Thursday afternoon. Interns must arrive Monday night. Late flights may be made for Thursday but you should not plan to leave for the airport until 4:30 p.m. Contact the program director for names and contact information of interns wanting to share accommodations and car rental/use.**

**11. Paperwork and Assignments**

Interns are responsible for completion of all paperwork regarding evaluations and written assignments. All work assigned to you by the Internship Director/coordinators or the Site Preceptors must be completed in the given time frame.

Interns must submit weekly summaries of their activities and competencies completed, hours accrued, and evaluations at the end of each rotation. The internship coordinator will review and provide feedback regarding intern progress. In the event that the intern is not progressing at an appropriate level and speed, a conference between the intern, coordinator and preceptor will be initiated. Remediation plans will be developed between the intern, preceptor and coordinator. The coordinator will provide assistance in identifying appropriate theoretical information deemed necessary. Preceptors will assist in identifying practical approaches deemed necessary. Appropriate remedial steps will be taken including extending the time in the rotation if deemed necessary to achieve the level of competency at an entry-level. If the preceptor is unable or unwilling to continue with remedial learning, it is the responsibility of the intern to find additional sites to successfully complete the rotation. The program is committed to retaining interns within the program and additional time will be granted for remediation. Failure of two rotations may result in termination from the program.

Interns are responsible for completion of all paperwork regarding evaluations, written assignments, and documentation of hours. All work assigned by the Internship Director or the Site Preceptors must be completed in the given time frame. Interns are required to submit all evaluation material within one week of the completion of each rotation. Originals are to be uploaded as part of the professional portfolio.

The Site Preceptors will have been instructed to complete the paperwork in timely fashion so as to provide timely feedback on intern performance in the facilities.

Interns are held to high ethical standards in all work. Interns must maintain confidentiality and integrity, and avoid plagiarism in any form.

Interns will be required to complete at least one practice exam each month. This exam must be completed by the last day of the month. All interns must address, in written format, any questions answered incorrectly.

All interns are required to pass a final exam with a score of 80% or better in order to successfully complete the program. Maximum of two attempts. Failure to meet this threshold will result in denial of a verification statement. Interns must provide the program IT coordinator with an acceptable proctor for the final exam. The IT coordinator will send an email to the proctor with instructions for opening and administering the exam. If the intern is not successful on the first attempt, he/she is required to wait at least one week prior to attempting the second exam, but is encouraged to wait longer if possible.

## **12. Minimum Wage Ruling**

The minimum wage ruling is in effect at all times during the internship, meaning that interns are not employees of the sites, and are not entitled to a job at the conclusion of the internship or an individual rotation.

The educational purpose of supervised practice is to provide students with the necessary learning and field-based experiences to achieve the CRDs. Dietetic interns should not be utilized as a replacement for employees. Supervised practice experiences will provide an environment for competency attainment as described in the rotation curriculum.

## **13. Intern Compensation**

When interns are paid by a supervised practice site during the internship, the agreement shall be between the facility and the intern. Interns are not employees of GCDI. No transaction shall occur between the facility and GCDI or between the intern and GCDI concerning compensation. GCDI shall maintain a copy of the agreement between the facility and the intern for the protection of the intern.

## **14. Insurance**

Interns are required to have professional liability insurance as well as health insurance and automobile insurance. Professional liability insurance can be obtained from Marsh and Associates for approximately \$20.00 The website is [www.marsh.com/us/services/financial-professional-liability.html](http://www.marsh.com/us/services/financial-professional-liability.html). Interns will need written documentation of individual liability insurance coverage. Interns must show proof of health insurance, liability insurance and automobile insurance during the orientation period.

## **15. Injury or Illness while in a Facility for Supervised Practice**

Interns will not have access to on-site health care in the event of injury or other emergency. Cost of treatments will be the intern's responsibility. Due to the nature of our affiliation agreements, interns do not qualify for worker's compensation due to injuries received on facility premises. If you have an emergency or other problem while at the site, please contact your coordinator or Distance Internship Director (228-297-8446).

## **16. Immunizations**

Several immunizations may be required, including hepatitis B, MMR (mumps, measles, rubella), and diphtheria/tetanus, depending on the hospitals or sites to which you are assigned. TB skin tests are likely to be required as well, especially at the hospitals. **INTERNS ARE FULLY SUBJECT TO THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AT EACH PARTICULAR SITE.** You may avoid some or all of the immunizations by bringing the appropriate immunization records with you to your sites. All interns are advised to take the Hepatitis B vaccine if they have not done so already. It is suggested that interns obtain copies of any documentation describing immunizations or TB skin tests received at various facilities in order to eliminate the need for additional immunizations/tests at subsequent sites. Any costs incurred as a result of needing TB tests or immunizations are the responsibility of the dietetic intern, although most hospitals will only charge a nominal fee for each immunization required.

## **17. Drug screens and background checks**

Interns will be required to submit to drug screens and background checks as required by the individual sites. FAILURE OF A DRUG SCREEN OR BACKGROUND CHECK WILL RESULT IN AUTOMATIC TERMINATION FROM THE PROGRAM. All interns must have background checks prior to orientation. Drug screens may be required in some locations and the cost may be paid by the facility or in some cases, the intern may be responsible for the cost of the testing.

## **18. Personal Appearance**

A professional appearance must be projected by interns at all times through their dress and grooming. The personal appearance of the Gulf Coast Dietetic Interns contributes greatly to the program's image and success. Professional attire is required.

- Clothing is to be neat, clean, in good condition, and properly fitted. Women may wear a dress, business suit, a (dress) pants suit, or a blouse and skirt or slacks, with or without a jacket. Hosiery should also be worn at all times with non-open-toed business shoes. Men may wear a suit, or a sports coat with dress slacks with a dress shirt and tie, or dress shirt and slacks. Socks and business footwear are also a requirement. Open toed shoes are not allowed. Examples of inappropriate clothing include athletic T-shirts, halter tops, tank tops, walking shorts, leotards, denim jeans, sundresses, backless or low-cut blouses, mini skirts or dresses of inappropriate length, and sheer apparel.

- The internship name badge should be worn with the name visible while working.

- Hair should be neat and clean, and in a conservative style. Beards and mustaches should be neatly trimmed and of moderate length. Hair restraint must be worn while in the kitchen for any foodservice or clinical rotations. In addition, food service rotations may not allow jewelry, nail polish or artificial nails to be worn.

- Cologne and perfume should not be worn in the event of working with patients or clients who have allergies.
- Wearing jewelry requiring piercing of body parts other than ear lobes is prohibited.
- Fingernails must be clean and trimmed. Nail polish, if worn, should not be cracked or chipped.
- Wearing of enhanced and/or artificial fingernails is prohibited.
- If lab coats are required, they should be cleaned and pressed and worn over professional street clothing.
- Interns are required to abide by any additional dress rules imposed by the facility in which they are working. Excessive jewelry is inappropriate, and safety precautions should be taken especially when working in the foodservice management rotations.

Interns must set an example of adherence to all site policies and procedures. Interns should obtain information regarding attire and protocols prior to arriving at each site.

## **19. Confidentiality of Medical Records**

REMEMBER THAT YOU MUST KEEP CONFIDENTIAL ALL INFORMATION THAT YOU RECEIVE AT THE FACILITIES REGARDING A PARTICULAR PATIENT AND HIS OR HER FAMILY. FAILURE TO DO SO CAN RESULT IN DISMISSAL FROM THE PROGRAM. DO NOT DISCUSS PATIENTS IN PUBLIC AREAS SUCH AS CAFETERIAS, ELEVATORS, RESTROOMS, ETC. DISCUSS PATIENTS ONLY IN STAFF-SECURED AREAS WITH APPROPRIATE PERSONNEL. A MEDICAL RECORD OR CHART IS A LEGAL DOCUMENT THAT CAN BE USED AS EVIDENCE IN A COURT OF LAW. DOCUMENTATION MUST FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES OUTLINED BY THE FACILITY. INTERNS WILL FOLLOW THE STANDARDS AS SET FORTH IN HIPPA AT ALL TIMES.



## **20. Medical Leave of Absence**

Request for medical leave must be approved by the coordinator/ internship director. Documentation of the medical condition will be required. If a medical leave of absence is taken, the intern must agree to re-enter the program at a time when the intern can schedule the remaining rotations at the approved sites. Medical leave for more than one year will result in forfeiture of the internship slot and program fees.

## **21. Non-completion of Internship**

In all cases, interns who do not complete the internship program successfully within a one year period are subject to dismissal from the program and forfeiture of tuition fees. Interns will have 60 days from the completion of supervised practice rotations to submit all required paperwork and complete the exit exam. Failure to meet this requirement will result in forfeiture of eligibility for the DI verification statement.

## **22. Protocols and Grievances**

It is the policy of the GCDI that interns have a right to redress their grievances. The Internship Director is the primary focus for problem-solving. Problems at a site or with a preceptor should be discussed with the Internship Director/coordinators as soon as possible. However, it is expected that interns cultivate cordial, professional relationships with the preceptor at the outset of any rotation.

Interns must first discuss the issue with the Site Preceptor, and attempt to resolve before bringing it up with the Internship Director/coordinators.

The intern as the aggrieved party should observe the following procedure: Within two days of the incident precipitating the grievance, the student should meet with his/her preceptor (if the problem is a rotation specific one, such as poor performance in a rotation) to openly discuss the problem in an attempt to resolve the complaint at this level, fully presenting all facts pertinent to the complaint within two days of the preceptor's response. If the action does not produce results acceptable to the student, he/she may file a written complaint to the coordinator. The coordinator will discuss this with the student and if unable to resolve the problem, it will be sent to the Program Director, The Program Director will provide a written decision to the individual within ten (10) working days of receipt of the written complaint. If this is not acceptable to the student, then it will be referred to the Grievance Committee. Nancy Letort, 228-392-5864, is the chair of the Grievance Committee. This decision will be considered final.

If the complaint is regarding any other issues then the student should first discuss with the coordinator and if that is unsatisfactory, then would submit a written complaint to the program director and then to the Grievance committee as desired or needed.

The following is the order in which a grievance may be reviewed:

Site Preceptor

Coordinators

Gulf Coast Dietetic Internship Director

Grievance Committee\*

Grievance for removal from the GCDI must be initiated within 30 days of intern dismissal from the program.

ACEND will review complaints that relate to a program's compliance with the accreditation/approval standards. ACEND is interested in the sustained quality and continued improvement of dietetic education programs but does not intervene on behalf of individuals or act as a court of appeal for individuals in matters of admissions, appointment, promotion or dismissal of faculty, staff, or

students/interns. Interns should submit complaints regarding accreditation matters to ACEND only after all other options with the program have been exhausted.

A copy of the accreditation/approval standards and/or the Council's policy and procedure for submission of complaints may be obtained by contacting the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND), 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190, Chicago, IL, 60606-6995 or calling 312/899-0040 extension 5400.

A file will be maintained in the Program Director's office for all grievances and complaints. These will be held for five year's time.

\*A subset of the advisory board consisting of DI directors and preceptors has agreed to function as a grievance committee and will be the final arbiter of any intern grievances. This policy will be communicated to prospective interns and the public via the website.

### **23. Verification Statements/program completion requirements**

It is the policy of the GCDI to issue verification statements to all interns who have successfully completed a minimum of 1200 documented hours of supervised practice, completed all required assignments, completed the exit exam with a score of 80% or better\*, in two attempts, returned any and all borrowed resources and uploaded all rotation documents to the DIapp within 60 days of completion of rotations. Verifications will be submitted approximately 3 weeks after program completion when all files have been verified. Copies of verification statements will be mailed to graduates when all interns have completed the program unless the intern requests this sooner. Original signed copies of the verification statements remain on file at GCDI indefinitely.

\*Should the intern not successfully complete the exit exam within two attempts, the faculty will make a determination to allow intern to remediate, dependent upon significant increase from first attempt to second attempt. If no significant increase occurred, faculty will allow intern to obtain verification statement upon successful passage of DTR exam.

## **24. Site Selection**

It is the responsibility of the distance intern to identify appropriate practice sites. Based on the information supplied through the application process, sites will be selected for affiliation with the GCDI based on the ability of the site to provide an appropriate learning facility. Program director will discuss with the lead preceptor and review relevant competencies and learning activities appropriate to the site's emphasis area. Scheduling procedures, length of rotation and learning activities will be mutually agreeable to both the PD and primary preceptor. Site evaluation will occur through intern evaluations and correspondence between the program director, primary preceptor and intern.

An affiliation agreement must be signed by both parties before interns may be placed in rotation at that site. The DI has a standard affiliation agreement form, approved by our legal counsel, that clearly delineates the rights and responsibilities of both the program and the affiliating organizations. Agreements are signed by the program director and by the authorized designated signee at the affiliating organization. It is common for hospitals to require that the program sign their form and the affiliation agreement coordinator will work with the affiliating organization to come to agreement on terms. All affiliation agreements are reviewed by our legal representative. The program director reviews affiliation agreements within the first 15 days of January each year to assure that agreements are current. All affiliation agreements are signed electronically, electronic copies are kept in the main office of GCDI. Electronic copies of affiliation agreements are backed up nightly with an onsite and an offsite cloud backup.

No situations would allow for an affiliation agreement to not be needed.

## **25. Assessment of prior learning:**

It is the policy of the GCDI to grant credit for prior learning to interns who can provide documentation of significant compensated work experiences that comprise the same types of learning experiences as required by the ACEND competency statements in particular emphasis areas.

Prior learning credits are granted when there is a minimum of 6 months FTE paid work experience. No credit will be extended for clinical work experience and only hours that meet or exceed the number of required hours for a particular rotation will be considered. No partial credit will be allowed and not more than one rotation will be waived. There is no fee reduction.

The request for prior learning credit consideration and all associated paperwork **must** be submitted at least two weeks prior to program start date. Supervisor must be qualified for the job and must submit letter of corroboration including dates of employment, responsibilities, and activities performed.

Final determination of assessment of prior learning is at the discretion of the internship director/coordinators.

## **26. Discipline and Termination**

Interns may be disciplined or terminated from the program as outlined below:

Interns may be disciplined by:

- 1) termination from the program (see below)
- 2) suspension for a time commensurate with the offense
- 3) suspension for remediation of knowledge or other aspects of performance as determined by the Internship Director

Interns may be terminated from the program for the following causes:

- 1) Repeated poor performance
- 2) Not following instructions as requested
- 3) Repeated absenteeism or tardiness
- 4) Unprofessional or unethical conduct or violating the policies of the internship as set forth in this document or the intern's signed contract
- 5) Two rotation failures
- 6) Non-payment of tuition.
- 7) Failure to pass drug screen or background check
- 8) Interns are held to high ethical standards in all work. Interns must maintain confidentiality and integrity, and avoid plagiarism in any form.

9) Other reasons as set forth in the signed contract

Grievance for removal from the GCDI must be initiated within 30 days of dismissal from the program.

## **27. Financial aid**

The GCDI is a self-funded non-academic program. As such, interns are not eligible for financial aid. Scholarships may be available through state dietetic associations and/or the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. It may be possible for students to obtain loan deferment for student loans while enrolled in the program. The program director will work with the interns to provide necessary documentation.

## **28. Evaluations**

Interns are evaluated throughout the program by both preceptors and the program director/coordinator.

The program director/coordinators provide feedback prior to the start of the program through the on-line training modules. Interns are evaluated throughout the pre-rotation experience in Mississippi. Program director/coordinators are also responsible for providing feedback regarding the projects assigned by the program for each rotation.

Weekly journal submissions assure interns remain on track to complete the program in no more than 150% of the time planned. These submissions also allow coordinators to monitor progress through the rotations and identify any intern struggling in the rotation.

Coordinators communicate with preceptors during the rotation to identify interns who may be struggling. Remediation is planned between the intern, the preceptor and the coordinator to address identified issues. Preceptors will provide pre-planned evaluations at the completion of rotations; Interns are required to

successfully complete the site competencies. Interns are evaluated on their abilities to complete the competencies at a level of reasonable independence and on their ability to perform in a professional and ethical manner. The goal of the internship is to train practitioners able to perform at an entry level.

## **29. Finding sites and preceptors**

Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT): Acceptable sites for MNT rotation included acute care hospitals, long term care facilities, Long Term Acute Care (LTAC) facilities, or rehab care centers. The MNT rotation is 10 weeks in length and must include experiences in critical care and outpatient counseling, either in the primary site or an alternate site depending on the facility. Interns are required to perform at least one week of staff relief at the end of the MNT rotation to demonstrate competence at an entry-level. The facility must have a minimum of one full time Registered Dietitian to serve as the primary preceptor.

Food service management rotation is 6 weeks in length. Acceptable sites include health care facilities, such as hospitals, long-term care, assisted living or rehab centers, or school food service. The rotation may be completed in one or more facilities. Preceptors are not required to be Registered Dietitians but must demonstrate competence in the areas of food service and management through their work experience, academic training or both. Interns are required to complete at least one week of staff relief at the end of the food service management rotation to demonstrate competence at an entry level.

Community nutrition rotations (5 weeks) may include WIC or Head Start experiences, outpatient counseling (if not covered in the MNT rotation), wellness and LTC (if not covered in the MNT rotation) in addition to public health/community programs. The length of stay in the various community rotations will be determined by the availability and accessibility of the required experiences and must be approved by the GCDI program director. Rotations extending one week or more will require a signed affiliation agreement with the GCDI. Interns are required to complete at least one week of staff relief at the end

of the community rotation to demonstrate competence at an entry level.

Elective rotation is 3 weeks in length and may be in an area of Entrepreneurship interest of the intern. Competencies for the elective rotation will be the business plan and marketing plan for a business or service developed as a collaboration between the program director/coordinators, preceptor and intern. Preceptors don't necessarily have to be Registered Dietitians but do have to be qualified for the job they hold. Questions about the acceptability of elective sites should be sent to [ginawack@aol.com](mailto:ginawack@aol.com)

Prospective preceptors are encouraged to contact the GCDI Dietetic Internship Director for additional information:

Gina Wack, MS, RD, LD

[ginawack@aol.com](mailto:ginawack@aol.com)

### **30. Student Signature Page for Receipt of Handbook**

Gulf Coast Dietetic Internship

I have received a copy of the Gulf Coast Dietetic Internship Handbook and recognize that it contains pertinent information regarding the program. I agree that I have read and will abide by the program requirements of the Dietetic Internship.

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Signature

Date

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Program Director

Date