INDIVIDUALIZED SUPERVISED PRACTICE PATHWAY (ISPP)
Internship Applicant Guide

University of Arizona
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
Department of Nutritional Sciences
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Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion
The ISPP Program at the University of Arizona is committed to promoting diversity in dietetics because we believe that a diverse workforce of registered dietitian nutritionists is critical to supporting resilience and health for all. Diverse perspectives in the profession will also lead to more innovations in healthcare, industry, agriculture and legislation which benefit society. The ISPP program actively works to diversify the field of dietetics by providing a program by acknowledging the value that diverse interns contribute to the program, through a fair and equitable application and admissions process. The program also supports interns by being flexible to interns and adaptable to integrate new environments and opportunities aligned with interns’ geographical location, goals and interests.
WELCOME to the Individualized Supervised Practice Pathway (ISPP) in the Department of Nutritional Sciences at the University of Arizona. This application guide is designed to serve as a resource for you as you prepare your application to our program. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Department Head: Scott Going, PhD

Departmental Information: 1177 E. 4th Street
Shantz Building, Room 309
Tucson, AZ 85721
Phone: 520-621-1187
Fax: 520-621-9446
nscdept@cals.arizona.edu

DPD Director: Mary Marian, DCN, RDN, CSO, FAND
mmarian@u.arizona.edu

ISPP Coordinators: Ashlee Linares-Gaffer, MS, RDN
alinares@email.arizona.edu

Kayle Skorupski, MS, RDN-AP, CSG, CNSC
kayleskorupski@email.arizona.edu

Please direct all questions regarding the ISPP Program to both ISPP Coordinators, Ashlee Linares-Gaffer and Kayle Skorupski in one email to both coordinators.

Useful Links:

University of Arizona
  ● http://www.arizona.edu/
Department of Nutritional Sciences Website
  ● http://nutrition.cals.arizona.edu/ispp-program
University of Arizona campus map
  ● http://map.arizona.edu/
ACEND information on ISPP Programs
  ● http://www.eatrightacend.org/ACEND/content.aspx?id=6442465002
AND Foundation Scholarship Information
  ● http://eatrightfoundation.org/scholarships-funding/
Program Overview

The University of Arizona offers an ISPP track for Tucson-based interns and distance interns. Only Alumni of the UA DPD program are considered for the Tucson track. Applicants who did not complete the DPD program at UA are only eligible for the Distance track.

The Individualized Supervised Practice Pathway (ISPP) is an alternative supervised practice pathway which, upon completion, allows graduates of DPDs to sit for the Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) exam. The UA ISPP program is accredited through Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) and requires a minimum of 1400 hours of supervised practice hours with rotations in clinical nutrition, community nutrition, food service, and others. The Tucson Track has an emphasis in community food systems and agriculture. Distance interns are able to choose an emphasis area in Medical Nutrition Therapy or Community Nutrition, based on their interests and opportunities for training in their home community. The Nutritional Sciences Department facilitates the program but interns must be self-directed and disciplined. It is up to the intern to communicate with rotation preceptors and coordinate completion of each rotation including all required competencies, projects, assignments and administrative paperwork.

Requirements of the ISPP Include:
• Bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution
• Verification Statement from the UA DPD, which is accredited by the Accreditation Counseling for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND). Doctoral degree holders are not required to hold a verification statement and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
• Participation in the dietetic internship matching process without being matched to a program within the past 24 months.
• Minimum 3.0 GPA overall in undergraduate degree, and 3.0 GPA for DPD coursework is preferred but those with GPA (cumulative or DPD) lower than 3.0 may be considered.
• No grade lower than a B in any nutritional sciences (NSC) course taken at UA, or in an equivalent course taken at an outside institution is preferred but those with grades lower than B may be considered.
• Nutrition-related work and/or volunteer experience. Examples include diet technician, diet aide, WIC nutritionist, community nutrition educator, school foodservice nutritionist
• Student member of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND)

The following intern characteristics are essential to successfully completing the program:
• Self-directed, independent learner
• Able to manage time effectively
• Effective written and verbal communication
• Confident working with a variety of individuals and health care providers
• Able to utilize a wide range of resources effectively
• Flexible in new or unexpected situations
• Comfortable with ambiguity and the unknown
• Able to receive and offer constructive criticism
**Tucson Track:** In this track of the ISPP program interns complete all rotations in Tucson and surrounding communities between. Only graduates on the University of Arizona DPD program are considered for this track with no exceptions. Approximately 6 interns are accepted each year but the exact number is determined each spring prior to the selection of applicants; the total number of interns accepted is dependent on availability of preceptors and rotation sites. Rotations for the Tucson track align closely with the traditional academic calendar year with rotations beginning in August and ending in May. In this track, interns can indicate the concentration area they prefer and every effort will be made to accommodate that selection although the preferred concentration area is not guaranteed. Interns will be notified of their assigned concentration area prior to the start of internship rotations in August.

**Distance Track:** This track of the ISPP program allows interns to complete rotations outside of Tucson. Applicants are not restricted to being alumni of the University of Arizona for this track. Up to 6 interns will be selected in a given year. Acceptance will be strongly based on the thorough completion of the application and overall strength of the applicant (work experience, GPA, etc.). Only applicants with strong commitments from preceptors and facilities to supervise their rotations will be considered. In this track, interns may propose to complete their rotations on a schedule that lasts anywhere from 9-18 months. Applicants must specify the concentration area of their choosing in the application. Distance interns will be assigned the concentration area of their choice, pending that they have identified a preceptor and site to complete the 3 week concentration area rotation.

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**Tucson Track Dates and Deadlines**

*See [https://nutrition.cals.arizona.edu/graduate/individualized-supervised-practiced-pathway-ispp/ispp-admissions](https://nutrition.cals.arizona.edu/graduate/individualized-supervised-practiced-pathway-ispp/ispp-admissions) for specific dates.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>April</th>
<th>ISPP application packet due to program coordinator. Incomplete packets will not be reviewed.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Notification Day – match results posted through D &amp; D Digital (<a href="http://www.dnddigital.com">www.dnddigital.com</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Appointment Day – matched applicants must contact dietetic internship to confirm intent to attend program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Names of dietetic internship programs that did not fill their class and authorized the release of their name will appear on <a href="http://www.dnddigital.com">www.dnddigital.com</a>. Applicants who did not match may contact Dietetic Internship Directors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Top applicants contacted to schedule interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Applicant interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Applicants notified of selection decision for ISPP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Administrative Orientation - Proof of immunizations, professional liability insurance and background check fee due. Will be scheduled individually.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>Program fee due - $10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>Mandatory ISPP Orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Tentative start date of ISPP rotations</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Distance Track Dates and Deadlines

Distance Track applications are accepted three times per year depending on when the applicant wants to start. Applicants must submit their application at least 3-4 months before their intended start date to allow time for application review, establishment of contracts and intern on boarding procedures. Distance applicants are encouraged to reach out the ISPP Coordinators to discuss their application in advance.

Application Deadlines:
- January 15th to start April, May, June, or July
- April 15th to start August, September, October or November
- October 15th to start January, February, or March

Program Costs:

The costs for the ISPP are estimated below and may vary based on specific circumstances, with the exception of the program fee which does not vary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Fee</td>
<td>$10,000 (flat rate; out-of-state tuition not charged)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Lab Coat</td>
<td>$50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Polo</td>
<td>$30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Attire</td>
<td>$150 (non-slip shoes, scrubs, professional wear-dress code varies by site)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books and Supplies*</td>
<td>$200 (varies)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AND Student Members**</td>
<td>$60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens Cert.</td>
<td>$13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Liability Insurance</td>
<td>$40 (approximate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laptop Computer</td>
<td>$500-1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation and Parking</td>
<td>$8.00/day for parking at on-site UA rotations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Testing and Background check</td>
<td>$100 (approximate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPR and First Aid Training***</td>
<td>$110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL EXPENSES TOTAL (EXCLUDES PROGRAM FEE): $1100

Additional Variable Expenses
- Personal Health Insurance
- Living Expenses

*Required Books and Supplies
- Food Medication Interactions, 17th Edition or later. By Zaneta Pronsky. $20-$30
- Suggested Supplies: Pocket calculator, pens and highlighters, note book, binders to organize resources, folders for each rotation, daily planner, back pack, spare flash drive. Additional supplies may be needed.

**Must be active AND + state + local district AND member at time of application and during the entirety of the ISPP Program.
*** The American Red Cross Adult and Pediatric CPR/AED/First Aid course is required for all interns who do not have existing certifications from other organizations at the time of acceptance to the ISPP. Existing certifications that are obtained prior to acceptance to the ISPP will be considered; discuss with the ISPP coordinator to determine whether a recertification is necessary.

Financial Aid
There are currently no scholarships, awards or stipends available for ISPP interns through the University of Arizona. ISPP interns are not eligible to apply for standard financial aid through UA because financial aid is only awarded to those who are degree-seeking students at the University. Applicants are encouraged to look for scholarship opportunities through the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation. More information is available at eatrightacend.org.

Application Checklist

*The following items are required for all applicants applying to the Tucson track and Distance track.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GETTING STARTED</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review the ISPP Applicant Guide and ISPP webpage for all pertinent information prior to beginning your application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email ISPP coordinators with questions in advance after you have reviewed the applicant guide.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPLICATION MATERIALS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resume/CV</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal statement</strong> (1000 words or less) addressing the following questions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Why do you want to enter the dietetics profession?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Discuss experiences that have helped to prepare you for your career.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o What are your short-term and long-term goals?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o What are your strengths and weaknesses or areas needing improvement?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o What other information do you consider important for the selection decision?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o If not already addressed with the above questions, what characteristics do you feel make you a good candidate?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Please indicate your preferred concentration area at the end of your personal statement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two letters of recommendation, preferably one from a work supervisor. A hardcopy of the DICAS reference in sealed envelope is acceptable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A copy of the D&amp;D Digital dietetic internship match results for most recent match cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work Experience Form</strong> (Excel file)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Volunteer Experience Form</strong> (Do not include experiences obtained for credit in NSC courses) (Excel file)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DPD Grade and GPA Worksheet</strong> (Word file)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Certificate of AND Student Membership</strong> (<a href="http://www.eatright.org/">http://www.eatright.org/</a>)</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTANCE INTERNS ONLY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Distance Application Form</strong>- See link on ISPP Webpage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Memorandum of Understanding</strong>- 1 signed by each preceptor listed on the Distance Application form- See link on ISPP Webpage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Proof of the following immunizations will be required at the mandatory administrative intern orientation in May so please plan accordingly to allow yourself time to obtain and/or update your records and schedule doctor appointments if necessary. Web or phone meetings will be scheduled with distance interns:

- Hep B (series must at least be initiated)
- Tuberculosis (TB)
- Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR)
- Varicella
- Tetanus, Diptheria and Pertussis (Tdap)
- Seasonal flu shot may be required by rotation sites- You do not need to show proof of a flu shot at orientation. Sites requiring flu vaccine will typically provide the shot free of charge if needed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION MATERIALS</th>
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</table>
| Submit all application materials to Ashlee Linares-Gaffer, ISPP Coordinator. Applications must be received by the application deadline. Please plan accordingly. | Ashlee Linares-Gaffer  
Department of Nutritional Sciences  
1177 E 4th Street  
Tucson, AZ 85721-0038 |

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**The Following Information is for Distance Track Applicants Only**

**What are preceptors?**

A preceptor is an expert or specialist, such as a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN). However, not all your preceptors must be RDNs. Preceptors should be someone involved with the field of nutrition and dietetics in some way. They should also be in a position to help guide your experience in the internship and help arrange experiences.

Clinical rotations must have a RDN as a preceptor, however the clinical site does not need to be large hospital. Skilled nursing facilities with rehabilitation units are a possibility for a clinical site.

**How to locate preceptors**

It will take effort on your part to locate and identify potential preceptors for your internship. Here are some tips for this process:

- Talk with your DPD advisor or Program Director
- Attend state and local dietetic association events to network and meet professionals working in your area
- Contact people you have worked or volunteered for previously
- Cold calling facilities (this may be frustrating, but sometimes you are able to make a connection)
  - If looking for a foodservice preceptor, as to speak with the Kitchen or Dietary Manager
  - If looking for a clinical preceptor, ask to speak with the Clinical Nutrition Manager or Director of Nutrition
- Search for preceptors on Eatright.org/pro – you have to be an active Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics member to access - [http://www.eatrightacend.org/ACEND/content.aspx?id=6442464994](http://www.eatrightacend.org/ACEND/content.aspx?id=6442464994)
Information for the applicants to share with prospective preceptors:
It is important to be organized and professional when making contact with potential preceptors. Be sure to introduce yourself and explain that you are planning to apply to a distance internship, which means you are responsible for planning your own rotations. You will want to be able to provide them with the following information when asking them to consider serving as your preceptor:

- What rotation(s) do you want to do under their supervision
- How many hours (in weeks) are you requesting to spend with them
- When are you requesting to spend time with them and can you be flexible with the dates
- Do you have any unique qualifications that might help you to be more of an asset to them at their facility (such as bilingual, experience working with veterans, CPR certification, etc.)

We recommend that you draft a well-formed email to send to preceptors that includes a personal introduction, your purpose, and the key information listed above.

Additional Information for prospective preceptors on behalf of the ISPP Program Coordinators:
Serving as a preceptor is an amazing opportunity for professional development. Preceptors can provide critical mentorship to help future dietitians develop into effective dietetics professional. Through this process both the preceptor and the intern often learn new best practices in the field together. Additionally, interns are educated and prepared to offer valuable assistance in rotation settings under the proper training and supervision.

Preceptors who supervise ISPP interns at the University of Arizona are expected to:
- Provide the prospective intern with a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), as documentation of your commitment to serving as a preceptor for the agreed upon rotation. The intern will provide this document to you to sign after you have agreed on tentative dates. This document must be included when the applicant submits their application.
- Provide training and supervision to interns for rotation hours they have agreed to oversee. Serving as a preceptor is very similar to the way you might train a brand new employee at your facility.
- Arrange unique learning opportunities for the intern while they are at your facility, as you are able.
- Log into a learning management system to approve intern time records
- Enter in 1-3 evaluations of the intern(s) level of competency during and after their rotation

Benefits to serving as a preceptor:
- Give service to the dietetics profession to help train the up and coming dietetics workforce.
- Stay up to date on topics and research as your intern engages you with questions.
- Intern can assist in completing special projects that you have been hoping to get done but have limited time to dedicate.
- Make a difference in an intern’s life; provide them the training they need to begin their career.
- Add Preceptor/Mentorship experience to your resume.
- Continuing Education Credit Hours while acting as preceptor for interns.
- Information from the Academy for preceptors: http://www.eatrightacend.org/ACEND/content.aspx?id=644246499