



UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

NUTRITIONAL SCIENCES PROGRAM

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

NUTRITIONAL SCIENCES PROGRAM GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

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GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

There are many academic and administrative steps involved in earning a degree from the Nutritional Sciences Program (NSP or Program). The Program and the UW Graduate School both have specific requirements. This Student Handbook is intended to provide an overview of important information regarding Program and Graduate School policies and procedures. It is an overview rather than an exhaustive document. Please consult the following for additional information regarding policies and procedures for your academic program.

- [University of Washington Graduate School](#)
- [School of Public Health](#)
- [Nutritional Sciences Program](#)

Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC) – Elizabeth Kirk

The Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC) is an official NSP faculty representative who acts as a liaison between the Program and the Graduate School. The primary role of the GPC is to advise, counsel and assist graduate students, or to assure that all students receive this service from another member of the graduate faculty. The GPC serves as your faculty advisor until you graduate or unless you choose a thesis. The GPC can assist with questions about selecting a culminating project your capstone, thesis, or dissertation project or forming your supervisory committee. The GPC also monitors students' academic progress regularly to ensure that program milestones are met and academic progress is satisfactory.

Graduate Program Adviser (GPA) – Susan Inman

The Manager of Student & Academic Services serves as the Graduate Program Adviser (GPA), the official NSP staff representative and liaison between the Program and the Graduate School. She is one of three, with the senior adviser and operations specialist, who make up the student and academic services team. The GPA and team can assist with program requirements, policy, degree audits, registration, teaching assistantships, program scholarships and funding, the student concern policy, health and wellness, graduation, events, community building, and just about anything that you are not sure how to address.

Graduate Coordinated Program in Dietetics Director, MPH Director – Anne Lund

The Nutritional Sciences MPH Director assists students in identifying potential practicum and fieldwork sites and can assist with questions and procedures related to the practicum and fieldwork requirement for MPH-nutrition students. As the Director of the RDN training program, they coordinate the curriculum and site placement for students completing the supervised practice portion of their dietetic training.

Graduate Coordinated Program in Dietetics, Student Services Coordinator – Lacey Henderson

The student services coordinator is your primary contact for student services questions pertaining to the RDN-training program.

Nutritional Sciences Program Core, Interdisciplinary, and Clinical Faculty

The NSP core faculty are the primary instructors and serve as the administrative body of the Program. They work on Program committees (Admissions and Curriculum) and serve as primary advisors and committee chairpersons/members. A larger group of interdisciplinary and clinical faculty serve as an extension of the NSP Core Faculty. Interdisciplinary faculty chair and serve on student committees, guest lecture in our courses, and often support and involve students in their research. Clinical faculty may be involved in instruction, serve as faculty advisors for capstone, and frequently provide practice experience mentorship for students in the Graduate Coordinated Program in Dietetics. The list of core, interdisciplinary, and clinical faculty can be found [online](#).

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REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

Registration

Registration is completed online through [MyUW](#). Quarterly class schedules and schedule line numbers (SLNs) are available in the [Time Schedule](#).

Entry or Faculty Codes

Please see [Graduate Student Resources](#) for instructions and required forms to obtain entry or faculty codes for:

- Independent Study, Thesis, or Dissertation Credits (600, 700, 800)
- Fieldwork or Practicum Credits (NUTR 532, 595)

If you are registering for a course in another department or program that requires an add code, please contact the department offering the course to request a code.

Grading Policies

All required courses for the MS, MPH, PhD and RD Training Program must be taken for a numerical grade unless the course is only offered with Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) grading.

A minimum grade of 3.0 is required for the successful completion of the core Nutritional Sciences classes. A minimum course grade of 2.7 is required for a course to count toward other program requirements, degree requirements, and the Graduate School's graded and total credit counts. Please see the GCPD handbook for minimum grade requirements for the successful completion of GCPD courses.

Electives may be taken for a numerical grade, CR/NC, or Satisfactory/Not Satisfactory (S/NS) if you have satisfied the Graduate School's minimum requirement for numerically graded credits. See: [Master's Degree Policies](#) or [Doctoral Degree Policies](#).

Maintaining Your GPA

At the end of each quarter, the Graduate School requires the Program to review your academic progress. To maintain graduate standing and to be eligible for a degree, you must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher for all courses numbered 400 and above. A GPA below 3.0 will be reviewed by the GPC and may result in a warning. If it continues for more than one quarter, it could result in Academic Probation.

Continuous Enrollment Requirements

To maintain graduate status, a student must be enrolled on a full-time or part-time basis or be in "On-Leave" status from the time of first enrollment in the Graduate School until completion of all requirements for the graduate degree. Failure to maintain either continuous enrollment or On-Leave status constitutes evidence that the student has resigned from the Graduate School.

A full-time load during the academic year is defined as at least 10 credits. RAs, TAs, and trainees are required to take at least 10 credits in autumn, winter and spring quarters and 2 credits in summer quarter during the quarters they are in their position. You must also enroll in a minimum of 2 credits in the quarter in which you graduate.

On-Leave Status (Requesting a Leave of Absence)

Graduate students are required to maintain graduate status during their program of study. If you plan to be away from the university (not registered) in any quarter other than summer, you must apply for On-Leave status. Eligibility requirements, policies, and procedures for requesting On-Leave status are further explained [here](#).

Failure to maintain graduate status through registration or an approved request for On-Leave status effectively ends a student's continuation in the program and requires a formal application to the Graduate School, approval by the Program, and a \$250 fee to obtain reinstatement.

Satisfactory Progress

To make satisfactory progress toward a graduate degree, you must meet all prescribed requirements and deadlines

during each academic quarter. Unsatisfactory progress and performance expectations are outlined in the [Graduate School Memorandum No. 16](#) and is further outlined for the Nutritional Sciences Program below:

You will not be making satisfactory progress if:

- 1) You are on academic probation for more than one quarter;
- 2) The Program has, by consensus, determined that you are not progressing adequately in your courses, capstone, or thesis/dissertation research, and has provided documentation as such.

If you are not making satisfactory progress in your course of study you will receive a letter to that effect from the Program Director or Graduate Program Coordinator. The GPC will request written explanations from you and relevant faculty. Prior to writing these explanations, you should request a meeting with the GPC or your faculty advisor. The Program letters will be placed permanently in your file; your letter may also be placed in the file, if you desire. After the GPC receives the written explanations, the faculty will review them at their next regular faculty meeting to determine the appropriate action. If no letter is received from you, and one week has elapsed between your notification and the faculty meeting, the faculty will consider the matter no later than the last regular faculty meeting of the quarter. Options the faculty may propose include:

- reinstatement to normal progress status, usually with a time limitation for completing certain requirements, and possibly with other conditions
- restriction or loss of service appointments (ASE's)
- termination from pursuit of a degree in the Program

The Program Director or Graduate Program Coordinator will give you the faculty's decision in writing and will place a copy in your file. If you wish to appeal the decision, you may request that the Program Director appoint an ad-hoc committee to consider the case in further detail. This committee would consist of three faculty members (not including your chairperson); two appointed by the Program Director and one by you.

Health Sciences Immunization Policy

During your course work and training, you may be in environments that present a risk for certain infections or serve vulnerable client and patient populations. For this reason, completion and documentation of all Center for Disease Control and prevention (CDC) recommended Health Care Personnel (HCP) immunizations and testing for tuberculosis are mandatory requirements for all students in the Nutritional Sciences Program. You are required to participate in and maintain compliance with the UW Health Sciences Immunization Program (HSIP). You will be charged an annual health fee each autumn quarter. If you do not complete the HSIP requirements each autumn, a registration hold will be placed on your account for winter quarter. Please see the [HSIP website](#) for detailed information on the required immunizations, program forms and required documentation, a complete list of HSIP services, and the current fee.

MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH/MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE INFORMATION

This section is intended to highlight some useful information pertaining to the pursuit of your master's degree. Use this section in conjunction with advice from your thesis chair or capstone advisor, the Graduate School, and the NSP.

Graduate School

- [Master's Degree Policies](#)
- [Master's Degree Requirements](#)

Nutritional Science Program

- [Master of Science Degree Requirements](#)
- [Master of Public Health Degree Requirements](#)

Time Limit

All work for a master's degree must be completed within **six years upon acceptance into the program**, including quarters registered and on-leave.

MPH/MS Degree Requirements

All MPH and MS students complete a structured curriculum comprised of required courses and electives and required milestones including participation in an Annual Graduate Student Research and Practice Symposium and a culminating project (capstone or thesis).

Due to separate curriculum requirements, course sequencing, and course access, it is not possible for MS students to switch to the MPH after enrollment.

Course Requirements & Degree Progress Tracking

Degree progress and course requirements are tracked through the University's Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS). DARS, which you access through your MyUW account, is a computerized degree audit that helps you monitor your progress toward completing your degree. Student and Academic Services staff may run a DARS report but you are ultimately responsible for checking on your progress. Questions about the DARS report or your requirements can be directed to gradnutr@uw.edu.

Graduate Student Portfolio

The portfolio summarizes the learning that has taken place in the core classes and beyond. Students prepare a self-assessment, outline next steps for their culminating or dissertation projects; and provide examples of course work including a scientific paper, policy brief paper, and PowerPoint presentation.

The portfolio should be a summation of positive achievements that provides a focus on the strengths students bring as they enter their second year of studies and begin work on their culminating project, as well as additional areas for development and continued training. Portfolios are submitted at the end of Spring Quarter during the student's first academic year. Information about the portfolio is provided in a spring quarter orientation and [online](#).

Graduate Student Research and Practice Symposium

Each spring quarter the Program holds a [Graduate Student Research and Practice Symposium](#). It is usually held on a Wednesday during the month of May. Attendance by all students is mandatory, and all students beyond their first year must present. Please plan with your employer or professors to accommodate this event.

Culminating Project

Master's students complete either a capstone or thesis.

The School of Public Health provides additional [guidelines](#) for the Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) requirement of the MPH degree, which can be met by the capstone or thesis. An ILE demonstrates synthesis of foundational and concentration competencies.

Capstone Project

Most students will complete a practice-based capstone project. Taken in the autumn of year 2, capstone is a client-focused, client-driven project where students will work directly with a community partner to complete a nutrition focused project. A session will be scheduled to provide more information about this option and help you navigate whether to proceed with this culminating project option or to switch to a thesis.

Master's Thesis

The purpose of a thesis is to provide experience with developing a research question, testing this question, obtaining data, analyzing the data, and writing the results. Please see the [Graduate Student Resources](#) website for the current thesis manual.

MPH Degree Requirements

The MPH curriculum has required practicum and fieldwork experiences which will give you first-hand experience in a field setting. It is each student's responsibility to work with the NSP Practicum Faculty Advisor to find, arrange, and complete practicum and fieldwork projects that fulfill program requirements.

International MPH Students

While enrolled in the Practicum, Fieldwork, and the GCPD Practice Experience, students with an F-1 visa must be registered for [Curricular Practical Training](#) (CPT). Work with the University's International Student Services (ISS) office to apply for CPT. Students with a J-1 or J-2 VISA must also meet with their ISS advisor to apply for [Academic Training](#).

Preparing for Graduation

You are required to contact Student and Academic Services **at least one quarter before you expect to graduate**, for a formal review of program degree requirements. A graduation checklist on the [Graduate Student Resources](#) website provides additional information about preparing for graduation.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE INFORMATION

This section is intended to highlight some useful information pertaining to the pursuit of your doctoral degree. Use this section in conjunction with advice from your chairperson and supervisory committee, the Graduate School, and the NSP.

Graduate School

- [Doctoral Degree Policies](#)
- [Doctoral Degree Requirements](#)

Nutritional Science Program

- [Doctoral Degree Requirements](#)

Time Limit

All work for the doctoral degree must be completed within **ten years**, including any quarters of leave.

NSP Degree Requirements

All PhD students complete a curriculum comprised of required courses and electives. Additionally, you will complete several required milestones including annual participation in the Student Research Symposium and completion of the Nutritional Sciences Graduate Student Portfolio, a PhD teaching requirement, general exam, dissertation, and final exam.

Course Requirements & Degree Progress Tracking

The PhD curriculum offers flexibility in selecting courses to satisfy several content areas. It is expected that you will plan courses to satisfy the requirements in consultation with your adviser and dissertation chair.

Degree progress and course requirements are tracked through the University's Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS). DARS, which you access through your MyUW account, is a computerized degree audit that helps you monitor your progress toward completing your degree. Student and Academic Services staff may run a DARS report but you are ultimately responsible for checking on your progress. Questions about the DARS report or your requirements can be directed to gradnutr@uw.edu.

Graduate Student Portfolio

The portfolio summarizes the learning that has taken place in the core nutritional sciences classes and beyond. Students prepare a self-assessment, outline next steps for capstone, thesis, or dissertation projects; and provide examples of course work including a scientific paper, policy brief paper, and PowerPoint presentation.

The portfolio should be a summation of positive achievements that provides a focus on the strengths students bring as they enter their second year of studies and begin work on their culminating project, as well as additional areas for development and continued training. Portfolios are submitted at the end of Spring Quarter during the student's first academic year. Information about the portfolio is provided in a spring quarter orientation and [online](#).

Graduate Student Research and Practice Symposium

Each spring quarter the Program holds a [Graduate Student Research and Practice Symposium](#). It is usually held on a Wednesday during the month of May. Attendance by all students is mandatory, and all students beyond their first year must present. Please plan with your employer or professors to accommodate this event.

PhD Teaching Requirement

PhD students are required to have teaching experience. This requirement may be fulfilled by a teaching assistantship under the direction of a faculty instructor, providing at least 1 guest lecture in an undergraduate or graduate course, teaching experiences at other institutions, or completion of the course GRDSCH 630: Teaching & Learning in Higher Education.

Doctoral Supervisory Committee

Your supervisory committee should be formed in your second or third year of study following approval of the Portfolio. This committee oversees your academic work throughout the program. The doctoral supervisory committee consists of a minimum of four members, at least three of whom (including the Chair and the Graduate School Representative [GSR]) must be members of the Graduate Faculty with an endorsement to chair doctoral committees. A majority of the members must be members of the Graduate Faculty.

GSRs are selected by the student in consultation with the committee chair. All endorsed graduate faculty, with the exception of affiliates, are eligible to serve as a GSR. GSR assignments are unlimited with the exception that faculty are limited to no more than four concurrent appointments within a specific department. The GSR cannot hold any departmental affiliations in common with the student or with the doctoral committee chair. The GSR's roles are to represent the broad concerns of the University with respect to high standards of scholarly performance; to provide, for The Graduate School, a non-specialist's view of the quality of the student's work, ensuring that the student's mastery of the subject matter is broad and comprehensive; and to assure that all procedures are carried out fairly and according to the guidelines of The Graduate School. For more information on the roles of doctoral committee chairs, members, and GSRs, visit [Memo 13: Supervisory Committee for Graduate Students](#).

In order to allow time to identify a suitable GSR, it is suggested that the doctoral supervisory committee be established at least four months prior to the intended date of the General Examination.

Once approved, submit your committee membership to Student and Academic Services by e-mail to gradnutr@uw.edu and copy the GPC. Your committee will be registered with the Graduate School for approval. If you select someone from off-campus to serve on your committee, a Curriculum Vita (CV) must accompany a letter to the Graduate School requesting an ex-officio appointment. Your supervisory committee should convene at least once a year to review your progress, discuss current issues, and determine future plans and activities.

Research Requirements & General/Final Exams

The process for preparing your dissertation proposal, planning your general exam, and working toward the completion and submission of your dissertation are described in the Doctor of Philosophy: Degree Requirements & Dissertation Process Guide available on [Graduate Student Resources](#).

Preparing for Graduation

You are required to contact Student and Academic Services **at least one quarter before you expect to graduate**, for a formal review of program degree requirements. A graduation checklist on the [Graduate Student Resources](#) website provides additional information about preparing for graduation.

GRADUATE COORDINATED PROGRAM IN DIETETICS

Students in the Graduate Coordinated Program in Dietetics (GCPD) work simultaneously toward completion of a graduate degree in Nutritional Sciences and the coursework and practice experiences necessary to become a Registered Dietitian (RD) or Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN). The RD and RDN are interchangeable terms for a single credential. Graduates of the program engage in client centered health promotion, disease prevention, medical nutrition therapy, public health practice, and nutrition policy development. Please refer to the GCPD Handbook for more information, policies, and requirements.

Admissions

Applicants to the GCPD must also apply and be admitted to the Nutritional Sciences Program/degree program; except for PhD students who can apply to the GCPD once enrolled in the degree program. Students currently enrolled in the NSP who wish to apply or reapply to the GCPD must meet with the program director and apply to the program by December 1 for the following year. Current students of the NSP are not given priority for admission to the GCPD. The GCPD admissions committee will solicit NSP faculty for references.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Academic Integrity

Students at the University of Washington (UW) are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic conduct, professional honesty, and personal integrity. To learn more about the SPH policy, see: <https://sph.washington.edu/students/academic-integrity-policy>

Campus mail/Email

The UW operates a campus mail system between campus addresses. Check your student mailbox in 330 Raitt Hall at least once a week, for mail, messages, and notices. (**Your campus mail address is: "Your Name", Box 353410**). Mail is picked up and delivered once daily. Important notices and information will also be sent to you via e-mail, so it is important that you check your University of Washington email often.

Graduate Student Advisory Council (GSAC)

The Graduate Student Advisory Council includes representatives from each cohort and degree program to provide a formal way of sharing feedback and engaging with the Program. SAC meetings are scheduled 2-3 times per year.

Graduate Student Representatives

Two graduate students each year serve as our representatives on the Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS). The GPSS represents UW graduate student concerns such as tuition, TA and RA salaries, and insurance coverage.

Health Sciences Express, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center and South Lake Union Shuttle

Faculty, staff, and students are provided free shuttle buses between the UW and various hospitals, clinics, and research facilities. [Health Sciences Express](#), [UW/Fred Hutch/South Lake Union Shuttle](#)

Nutritional Sciences Program Office

The NSP Office is in 305 Raitt Hall and is open from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Nutritional Sciences Student Room

The NSP has a student room located in 330 Raitt Hall. It is available during regular building hours. There are computers available for student use, as well as a printer, conference table, whiteboard, and a small collection of books and other resources.

Photocopy Services

Copy facilities for student use are not available in the NSP Office or in Raitt Hall. There are copy centers located nearby in the Communications Building, Odegaard Library, and Suzzallo Library. There are also photocopy businesses on University Way.

Raitt Hall Access and Security

The doors to Raitt Hall are opened at 8:00 a.m. and are locked at 5:00 p.m. The building is locked on weekends and holidays. The UW buildings are public and many people pass through them daily. The UW is not responsible for personal property brought into the buildings. Report thefts and suspicious persons to the University Police at 911. For non-emergency issues or questions, the UW Police Department can be reached at 206-685-8973.

Seminars, Lectures, and Grand Rounds

The UW is a prestigious teaching and research university. You are encouraged to attend the many seminars, lectures, and grand rounds available. Notices are posted on the bulletin boards in the hallway just outside the Nutritional Sciences Program Office and in several locations in the Health Sciences Building.

Student Concern Policy

The School of Public Health (SPH) Student Concern Policy was revised in 2018 in order to better partner with students to resolve conflicts and address concerns that arise during the student's educational program. Students are invited to pursue resolution of concerns that arise as a result of their enrollment in SPH through informal or formal mechanisms. Faculty, staff and administrators will act in good faith to listen, understand, and work in partnership with students to resolve issues that impact students individually, and to consider the totality of reported concerns to improve the school climate and educational outcomes for all students. Students are encouraged to attempt to address concerns as they arise informally, seek assistance for redress pathways, and when necessary, pursue a formal resolution process. To learn more, see: <https://sph.washington.edu/students/student-concern-policy>